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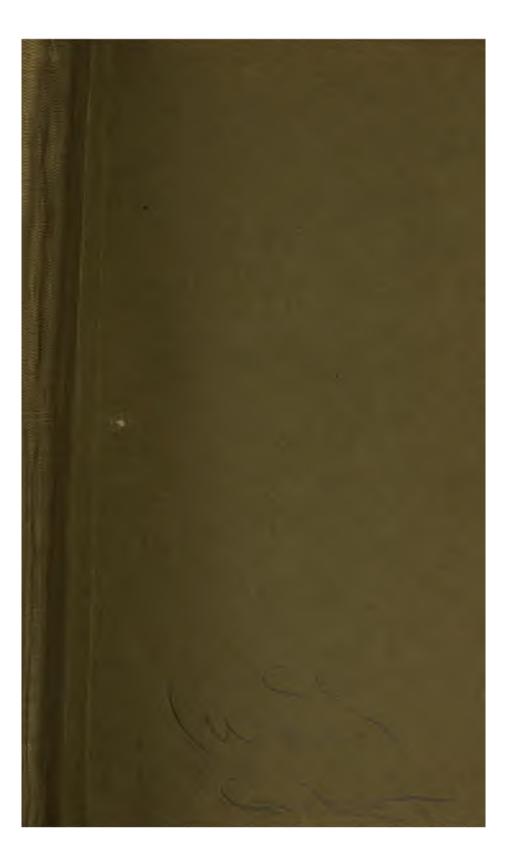
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HISTORY OF WEM,

AND THE FOLLOWING

VILLAGES AND TOWNSHIPS,

VIZ.

EDSTASTON, COTTON, LOWE AND DITCHES, HORTON, NEWTOWN, WOLVERLEY, NORTHWOOD, TILLEY; SLEAP, ASTON, AND LACON.

TAKEN FROM THE MANUSCRIPT OF

The late Rev. SAM, GARBET, A. M.

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PREFACE

Thas been long lamented, that Shropshire has produced no Author that has taken a Survey of it, and published its natural and civil History, its Antiquities, and present State. This County does indeed Boast of the famous Lawyer Plowden, the celebrated Hebrician Broughton, the learned divine Dr. Whichcote, the admirable Linguists Wheelock and Hyde, the excellent Grammarians, Critics, and Antiquaries, Burton and Baxter; but still wants a Plot, or Ashmole, to give a topographical and historical Description of it. Mr. Mytton lately undertook to supply this Defect, and with that View has made very valuable Collections; but the Difficulties and Discouragements he met with, prevented the Execution of so good a Design. Several Years ago I began my Enquires about Wem, which as Time and Opportunity serve, I shall carry through North Bradford. But at Present I shall confine myself to the Allotments of Wem and Shawbury.

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THE NAME.

BOUNDARIES, and EXTENT.

OF

NORTH BRADFORD.

-+

HROPSHIRE is divided into twelve hundreds, the liberty of Shrewsbury, and the Franchise of Wenlock. These parts are very unequal, for the hundred of Bradford contains near a quarter of the county. Bradford is a contraction of Bradanford, and signifies a broad and safe passage through a river or brook; but the situation of that broad ford, which gave name to the hundred, is entirely unknown. The author of the late Magna Britannia is mistaken in asserting that Bradford is a small inconsiderable village in North Bradford, for no such village can there be found.

The Boundaries of North Bradford.

In the 24th Charles the II. the Right Honourable Francis Newport, Baron of High Ercal, obtained of that King a grant of the Fee of the hundreds of Bradford, Stottesden, Condover, and Pimhill, to him and his heirs for ever, paying, as I am told, a certain annual rent to the Crown: and this was the reason, that upon his advancement to higher degrees of nobility, he had the title, first of Viscount. afterwards of Earl of Bradford. At present, 1740. the Fee of the hundred of Bradford is invested in Mrs. Ann Smith, as trustee for her son John Newport, Esq. She nominates the officers belonging to the hundred Court at Wellington, which is a Court of Record, where persons may sue for any sum not exceeding £20. There are five Attornies belonging to it, according to the number of Market Towns in the hundred.

The author of the late Magna Britannia, Spelman's Villare Anglicum, and all the maps of Shropshire that I have seen, reckon North Bradford and South Bradford two distinct hundreds, whereas they are but one. In this error Speed led the way, and the rest followed him as in a beaten track.

North Bradford sends no Members to Parliament, but contains two Boroughs, three Market Towns, fourteen Parishes, and seventy nine Villages. It is bounded on the north by Cheshire, on the east by Several Reasons for the Purity of the Air of North Bradford.

the county of Stafford, on the south by South Bradford, on the west by the liberty of Shrewsbury, the hundred of Pimhill, and the county of Flint. It is about fifteen miles long from its north-east Angle, near Gravenhunger, to its south-west point, near Little Whiteford. It is about twelve miles broad from Hinton to Sambroke.

THE NATURAL HISTORY OF NORTH BRADFORD.

several reasons may be assigned, as 1st. because it is remote from the sea the parent of unwholesome vapours, which render all the maritime parts of England aguish and sickly. 2nd. because it has few standing pools, marshes, and boggy grounds, which by their watery mists and fogs, breed or occasion catarrhs, coughs, aches, rheumatisms and other disorders. 3rd. because it is not incumbered with many or large woods, which keep the particles of the air too close, and cause them to stagnate; upon which account our American Colonies have been more healthful since their woods were felled.

The Course of the River Teru.

4th. because here are no lead, iron, or copper mines, which generally emit noxious exhalations. But the clearest proof of the wholesomeness of the air is the health and longevity of the Inhabitants, many of which, live 80 or 90 and some above 100 years.

Water, for common use, is very plentiful and very good. Besides living springs, which are almost every where to be met with, there are many brooks and rivulets, which for the most part are nameless; and two rivers, Tern, and Rodon.

TERN has its rise and name from a large pool at Meer in Staffordshire; Camden says, such large pools were called Tearns. It runs two miles by the name of Tern Black Brook. At Willow Bridge it takes the name of Tern, and from this place to Drayton, divides the counties of Salop and Stafford; it turns Winnington forge, Bearston corn-mill, Norton forge, Oakley corn-mills, Davison's mill, near Betton; another at Turnstal, below Shepherd's Bridge, which is of stone, for the passage of horses; it drives Hinsley mill, where being joined by a rivulet called Colebrook, it runs by the side of Drayton, and has there a wooden cart bridge over it, and a little horse bridge of stone, at a place called the Walkmill, because there formerly was one. Next it turns a paper-mill newly erected, then a corn-mill at Buntingsdale, having first passed under a cart

The Course of the River Rodon,

bridge. A little below Ternhill, it crosses the road from Whitchurch to London, where there is a stone bridge for horses over it, called Tern Bridge. A quarter of a mile lower it turns Tern new mill, and having received a rivulet, called Passage Water, drives a mill a Wollerton, another at Stoke, where it runs under a wooden bridge for earts; after this it turns a corn-mill at Peplow, a forge at Eaton, and then being joined by the river Tees, it enters South Bradford. The upper part of this river is famous for trout, and the lower for pike, and roach; it does also afford perch, carp, eels, dace, gudgeons, &c.

RODON or Rodan is formed by the confluence of three brooks, which in very dry summers loose: their currents. The first of these rises from Whixall Moss, and passes under a stone bridge at Newtown. and another at Wolverley. The second comes from Bettisfield Heath, in Flintshire; and runs under a wooden bridge at Black Water Ford. The third proceeds from the White Meer in the township of Lee, near Ellesmere, turns the little mill in the township of Crowsmere, and another mill at Lineal. All the three rivulets meet in Wolverley meadows, and running thence pass under Penceford wooden bridge near Loppington, receives Sleap brook near Tilley, and passing under the stone bridge turn the corn-mills at Wein. Here they become a river, and take the name of Rodon, which at Aston has a long

The remarkable Pools in North Bradford.

wooden foot-bridge over it. In 1740 the ford here was dry from the beginning of June to the 26th of July. Below Aston, being augmented with Soultonbrook, it passes under a stone bridge for carts, consisting of two arches at Thistle ford, and another of three arches at Lee Brockhurst, next it visits the paper-mills now in ruins, near Besford; drives a corn-mill at Harcot, another at Stanton, a forge at Sowbatch, and a corn-mill at Shawbury, where there is a long wooden bridge for horses over it: then it enters South Bradford, and at Walcot runs into Tern. This little river is most remarkable for its excellent pikes; but it yields several other sorts of fish, as perch, dace, eels, graylings, bottlelings, chubs, gudgeons, and at, and below the papermitl, roach.

The most remarkable pools are those of Moston, Osmere, and Blackmere.

There is a salt spring at Smithmore, in the lordship of Longford, but no wiches in this part of the hundred, which is supplied with salt from Cheshire.

At Moreton Sea is a mineral water which proveth purgative to those who drink it, and at Lee Brockhurst a cold bath neatly cut in a rock. Search for Oars and mineral Substance about North Bradford.

What the bowels of the earth may contain is not fully known; but as yet no mines of gold, silver, tin, or lead have been discovered. Iron-stone is found, but not in such quantity, or not in that perfection as to encourage any iron-work. H. Tenison, Esq. got copper ore in his estate about Red Castle, but it lay so deep that it turned to little account. The Rev. Mr. Snelson expected to find this hidden treasure at Weston, but had his labour for his pains, and his expence for his trouble.

North Bradford yields no mill-stones, no limestone for mortar, and fertilizing land, no marble for building; but there are quarries of free-stone at Hattonhind Heath, Moston Heath, Little Drayton Heath, and Ireland's Cross, near Gravenhunger.

Little search has been made for pit-coal, till of late when Mr. Camberbach in vain sought for it in the township of Ightfield.

The most profitable subterranean earths are clay for making bricks, marle for the improving of lands, and peat or turf for firing.

The most remarkable hills are those of Lee Brockhurst, Weston, Red Castle, and High Hawkestone. Lee and Weston hills, separated only by a deep and narrow road called Hallow-way, are about a mile in length. The pastures and meadows generally produce good grass and hay, and thereby maintain great dairies, which supply the markets with plenty of butter, and the factors with vast quantities of cheese, in goodness not much inferior to those of Cheshire.

Nor is the arable land less fruitful and productive of grain, such as wheat, rye, barley, peas, beans, and oats. Its roots, turnips, carrots, &c. are equal to what grow in other parts, but its potatoes the best in England; they afford a strong and wholesome nourishment, and in times of dearth supply the want of bread, the poor making them their principal food.

Wood is no where very scarce, but in some places plentiful, being chiefly used for fuel in country houses during the summer season.

Timber for building is not yet wanting, but it grows dearer, and in some ages will fetch double the present rates since the trees planted bear no proportion with those that are felled. In the parish of Wem there were formerly several large woods, of which little now remains but their names. Shawbury signifies a wood town, or a town surrounded with woods, the greatest part of which are felled for timber, and to supply the neighbouring forges with charcoal. Near Weston there are several

The Ecclesiastical, and Civil Divisions of North Bradford.

coppices. Morden's map represents the allotment of Cheswardine as overgrown with trees, but time has cleared it, and left only some relicks of Cheswardine Wood,

The horses in this division are fit for the saddle, the plough, and other country business, but are not large enough for the coach.

The horn cattle are of a middle size somewhat less than the Lancashire, but much larger than the welch breed. The finest in this part of the hundred are bred about Shawbury.

The parish of Stoke is most remarkable for sheep, whether we consider their number, or the fineness of their fleeces.

Shropshire hogs are reckoned the best in England, and those of North Bradford as good as any in the county; they are large, broad set, and weighty, which may be owing to their being fed with peas.

THE ECCLESIASTICAL, AND CIVIL DIVISIONS.

NORTH BRADFORD is within the diocese of Coventry, and Lichfield, and within the

The Constablewicks of North Bradford.

deanaries of Shrewsbury, and Newport. It is divided into fourteen parishes; Wem, Whitchurch, Great Drayton, Hodnet, Cum Moreton Sea, Stoke, Prees, Moreton Corbet, Shawbury, Ightfield, Hinstock, Adderley, Norton, Stanton, and Lee Brockhurst.

As to its civil government, it is within the county of Salop, and the hundred of Bradford. It is divided into two high constablewicks, Wem, and Drayton.

The high constablewick of Wem is divided into four allotments, Wem, Whitchurch, Shawbury, and Prees.

The high constablewick of Drayton is likewise divided into four allotments; Great Drayton, Stoke, Cheswardine, and Hodnet.

The allotment of Wem is divided into twelve petty constablewicks; Wem, Edstaston, Cotton, Horton, Newtown, Northwood, Wolverley, Lowe and Ditches, Lacon, Soulton, Aston, Tilley and Trench.

The allotment of Whitchurch is divided into thirteen petty constablewicks; Whitchurch, Doddington, Hinton, Hollyhurst and Chirmel, Old Woodhouse, Great Ash, Little Ash, Ightfield, Broughall, Alkington, Tilstock, Edgley, and New Woodhouse.

The Allotments of the different Parishes of North Bradford.

The allotment of Shawbury is divided into eight petty constablewicks; Shawbury, Muckleston, Little Withiford, High Hatton, Edgebolton, Stanton, Moreton Corbet and Booley Moston, and Lee Brockhurst.

The allotment of Prees is divided into nine petty constablewicks; Prees, Wixall, Steel, Darleston, Saudford and Ashley, Millen Heath, Cowerhall, Woolaston, Fauls, and Mickley,

The allotment of Drayton is divided into twelve petty constablewicks; Great Drayton, Woodease, Betton, Howle, Hinstock, Sambroke, Pickstocks, Pilson, Sutton, Longslow, Little Drayton, and Hinstock,

The allotment of Stoke is divided into seven petty constablewicks; Stoke, Child's-Ercal and Goldston, Wistonswick, Eaton, Ollerton, Norton, Elleston, with part of Sambrokes.

The allotment of Cheswardine is divided into eight petty constablewicks; Cheswardine, Adderley, Spoonley and Sherrington, Dorrington, Chipnal, Sowdley, Bearson, Woore, Gravenhunger.

The allotment of Hodnet is divided into thirteen petty constablewicks; Hodnet, Little Bolas, Blechly, Longford, Kenston, Peplow, Hopton and The Farish, Allotment, and Manor of Wem.

Espeley, Moreton Sea, Weston and Wixill, Stych and Woodlands, Hawkestone, Marchamley and Losford, and Wollerton.

THE PARISH, ALLOTMENT, AND MANOR OF WEM.

Newport, and is subject to the visitation of the Archdeacon of Salop. The length of it from east to west, that is from Ball's of the Brook, to Black Waterford, is six miles; the breadth of it from north to south, that is, from Sandland's Brook in the confines of Whitchurch parish to Billow Brook that divides it from the liberties of Shrewsbury, is five miles. It contains Wem, the church, and market town, and twelve hamlets or villages, Edstaston, Cotton, Newtown, Northwood, Wolverley, Horton, Lowe and Ditches, Lacon, Soulton, Aston, Tilley and Trench, and Sleap.

The allotments of Wem is of less extent than the parish, for it does not include Sleap, which belongs to Pimhill hundred. In respect to the landtax which was first granted in 1689, the first year of

The Township of Wem.

William and Mary, it is computed to be £2911. 15s. 5d. per annum, and consequently the sum charged upon it at 1s. in the pound is £145. 11s. 9d.

The manor of Wem is of less compass than the allotment, for it comprehends only the market town of Wem, together with nine hamlets within that Parish; Edstaston, Cotton, Newtown, Northwood, Wolverley, Horton, Lowe and Ditches, Aston, Tilley and Trench, and one hamlet in the parish of Prees, viz. Steel.

All lands within this Manor were either the Lord's demesne, or held of him by the several tenures of freehold, borough-hold, or copyhold. The Lord's demesne, which in ancient times was very large, is now reduced to nothing, having been alienated at several times to several purchasers. This encreased the number of freeholders, who before were but few.

Oxen are seldom seen here, only horses being used for draught. But few sheep are kept; they which feed on Cotton Wood are of a small size.

THE TOWNSHIP OF WEM.

HE township of Wem extends north-ward to Creamore Brook, which divides it from Of the Landtax and its Soil about the Neighbourhood of Wem-

Edstaston, south-ward to the farther bridge at the mill, which divides it from Tilley, east-ward to a rivulet beyond the cottage of Samuel Forgham, which divides it from Lacon, west-ward to another rivulet near Mr. Green's marle pit, which separates it from the Lowe. The boundary towards Aston is a cross pavement near Cordway Hill; towards Horton, the bridge between the houses at the Ditches.

In respect to landtax, this township is valued at £761. 13s. 4d. per annum, and so the sum charged upon it at 1s. in the pound, is £38. 1s. 8d.

The soil, exclusive of the pool land, is generally mould or mother earth, of a dark brown colour, and pretty dry. It is mostly arable, and does best produce muncorn, rye, and barley. The chief manure is muck, though considerable quantities of lime are used. Heifers are the cattle the farmers chiefly breed for sale. Wem pool in ancient times was waste ground, in which the burgesses of the town had free common. In the beginning of queen Elizabeth's reign, certain parcels of it had been lately enclosed, as now the whole is. These pool lands which are about two miles in compass, are all pasture ground, and in the winter much exposed to floods.

The Name, Situation, and Antiquity of Wem.

THE NAME, SITUATION, AND ANTI-QUITY OF THE TOWN OF WEM.

HE etymology and meaning of the name are unknown. From William the I. to Edward VI. inclusively it was written Wemme; from Henry VII. to James I. Weme with a dash over it; from Charles II. to the present time Wem, the dash and final e being omitted. In the statute of West. 20th, of Edward I. it is called Wimme, perhaps by an error of the press.

This town is situated in a sweet and wholesome air near the river Rodon, at the distance of seven miles north from Shrewsbury, six miles south from Whitchurch, six miles south-east from Ellesmere, and nine miles south-west from Drayton. The ground it stands upon is near a level, having only such a gentle rise towards the middle as is sufficient to throw off the rain and other water, which contributes much to the cleanness of it.

As it can boast no Roman remains, it seems to be of Saxon original. During the Heptarchy, it was subject to the king of Mercia; but at that time, and even after the Norman conquest, it was only a village, but the largest and most considerable of twenty-eight towns, or manors held by William Pantuff.

The Custems of Wem in former Times.

The first records that mention it are Domesday book in the exchequer, which was written between the years 1080 and 1087. An abstract from it will be acceptable to the curious.

WEMME.

Willielmus Pantuff, tenet de Rog, Comite. Ibi 4 hıdæ geldabiles. Wighe et Leninus et Alnena tenuerunt pro 4 Ma. Ibi aira accipitris.

IN ENGLISH.

William Pantuff holds it of earl Roger. There are 4 geldable hides. Wighe and Lemine and Alnena held it for four Mano. There is an airy of the Hawk.

That this may be intelligible it will not be improper to make the following observations.

Earl Roger was Roger earl of Shrewsbury. A hide or plough land was as much land as could be yearly tilled by a single plough, and was sufficient for the ordinary maintenance of one family.

Geldable signifies liable to pay the tax of hidage. For then when the occasions of government required,

a tax was laid on every hide of land. Thus in 1084, William the conqueror obliged his subjects to pay six shillings for every hide of land in England.

Wighe, Lenine, and Alnena were possessed of Wem in the reign of Edward the confessor, and then it consisted of four manors or farms.

An Aery or Airy of the Hawk is a place where hawks were used to build their nests.

At this time most of the ground about Wem lay waste, covered with a vast pool, or overgrown with thick woods.

THE BARONY OF WEM.

N entire barony consisted of thirteen knights' fees, and a third part; and a knight's fee was so much land of inheritance as was sufficient to maintain a knight, which in the reign of William the conqueror, was about fifteen pound per annum; consequently a barony at that time may be reckoned £200. per annum. £1. then was equal to £15. now; so £200. being multiplied by 15, shews that the estate of a baron amounted to £3000. per

annum, according to the present estimation of money.

When William the conqueror deprived the English of their estates, he gave the greatest part of Shropshire to Roger de Montgomery; and the said Roger shared it out among his men, that is, among the principal officers that commanded under him, on condition that they should pay him homage, fight for him, not dispose of their daughters in marriage, nor of their goods by will without his licence: that their heirs whilst minors, should be in wardship to him, and when they came to age, pay a relief for admission to their estates; that widows should likewise pay for the assignation of 'a dower, besides some small reserved rents, and aids upon extraordinary occasions, the whole being to revert to the superior lord for treason or felony. refusal of service, or want of heirs. On these terms earl Roger granted to William Pantulf, twentyeight towns, or manors, or farms, in the county of Salop; whereof Wem being one of the chief, the said Pantulf made it his seat, and the head of his barony.

At first, when the general survey was taken, William Pantulf was one of earl Roger's barons, but Robert de Belesm, a son of this Roger, rebelling against Henry I. forfeited his vast estate to the

crown, and thenceforth William Pantulf and his successors held the barony of Wem in Capite, and thereby became barons of the realm, or parliamentary barons.

The barony of Wem was of great extent: on the north it reached to Whitchurch; on the east it took in Tilley and Cresswell, in Staffordshire; on the south it bordered on the Clive; on the west on the parish of Ellesmere.

But the barony extended so far, there were several manors within this compass that belonged to other persons; as the manor of Prees did to the bishop of Lichfield and Coventry; the manors of Red Castle, Weston, and Marchamley to lord Audley.

The twenty-eight towns, manors, or farms given to William Pantulf, are to be found page 257 column of Doomsday book. But since I cannot get a copy of it, I shall make a catalogue of them from other writings.

1, Wem. 2, Tilley. 3, Cotton. 4, Newtown, or Newton. 5, Beslaw, in the parish of Wroxeter. 6, Steel, in the parish of Press. 7, Loppington. 8, Hinstock. 9, Buntingsdale, in the parish of Drayton. 10, Cowleshurst, in the parish of Dray.

The anci at Barons of Wern.

ton, 11, Tibberton, in the parish of Edgmund, 12. Brocton, near Church Aston, not far from 13, Eyton upon the Wildmores. Newport. horton, in the parish of Kinnerly, or Dunnington. 15, Upton, near Shiffnall. 16, Great Dawley. Cresswell, in Staffordshire. All these 17 are mentioned as manors in the survey, in 1561, and the 9 last were dependent on Hinstock. 18, Tirley, in Staffordshire, very near Drayton, where the barons of Wem had a castle, at which they often resided. 19, Whixall, in the parish of Prees. This manor was by marriage carried to the Sandfords. 20. Doddington, in the parish of Whitchurch. This manor William de Boterler II. in 1st Edward III. settled after his own death on John L'Estrange, of Blackmere, who had married his daughter Ankaret. 21, Frankton, in the parish of Loppington. Alkington, in the parish of Whitchurch. 23, Edsley, in the parish of Whitchurch. 24, Harpcote, perhaps Harcot, in the the parish of Stanton. 4 last are taken from Mr. Mytton's papers. 26, Sleap. 27, Edstaston. The 4 last rest only on my conjecture,

THE BARONS OF WEM.

HE first barons of Wem were the Pantulfs, who were succeded by the Botelers, and they

The assignt Barons of Wem.

by the Ferrers, Greystocks, Dacres, Howards, Playters and Onslow, Wycherley, Jeffreyses, and Newports.

I will give as full an account as I can find of the barons of each of these families.

1st, THE PANTULFS.

Of the succession of the Pantulfs there are four different accounts given by Dugdale, Ashmole, Mr. Wycherley's chart, and a manuscript belonging to the manor of Wem.

Dugdale.	Ashmole.	Wycherley.	Wem, M. S.
William Robert Hugh Ivo William Hugh William	William William William Hugo Ivo-Hugo Roger William	William William William Hugo Hugo William	William William Hugh Hugo William

It will be very difficult to reconcile these lists. In the first and last are only three Williams, in the other two there are four. They all agree in two Hughs. Dugdale and Ashmole have Ivo, but he and his son William are omitted in the lists, be-

cause the lineal descent was not continued by them. Roger is found only in Ashmole, and Robert only in Dugdale, which last I shall choose for my guide in these dark and remote times, as having made the most diligent inquiry, and written most fully about this family. However, I differ from him in inserting William 2nd and 3rd, between Robert and the first Hugh, upon the authority of the other lists, and in consideration of the number of descents in other contemporary families.

1st, William Pantulf, knight, had a great estate in Normandy, which he held of his superior lord Roger de Montgomery, a relation and one of the generals of William the conqueror. By his tenure he was obliged to attend this Roger in war; and so he came over with him in the famous expedition against 1066. In the battle of Hastings the England. Norman army was drawn up in three bodies, and the first of them was commanded by Montgomery In this line Pantulf fought; for and Fitz-osbern. he was a principal officer under the former of them. When the conqueror divided the spoils of the English, he gave Roger de Montgomery almost the whole county of Salop, and made him earl of Arundel and Shrewsbury. Earl Roger bestowed 28 or 29 towns or manors in that county, on William Pantulf, to be held by military service. manors consisted of so many knights' fees as com-

posed a barony; the head of which Pantulf fixed at Wem, which he chose for the place of his residence. This first baron was remarkable for his prudence and courage; and therefore earl Roger, who was a good judge of men, trusted and employed him much in the management of the most weighty affairs in this county.

1074. In the 9th William the conqueror thro' the advice of Mainer, the venerable abbot of St. Ebnifs at Uttica, in Normandy, William Pantulf founded the abbey of St. Peter, Norum, in that country, and amply endowed it with lands, and the churches and tithes belonging to them, within his several lordships, both in England and Normandy. Moreover he gave all his personal estate to be equally divided between the monks of St. Ebnifs, and those of Norum; Roger de Montgomery then residing at Belesm, in le Perche, confirming the donation.

William Pantulf accompanied Robert, abbot of St. Ebnifs, (brother to Hugh de Grentmesnil) after he had been at the dedication of the churches of Caen, Baieux and Bee, (which were consecrated the same year) into Apulia; at which time Robert Wigard, then duke of Calabria, received him with much honour, and taking notice of his valour, endeavoured to retain him in his service with promise of

ample reward, setting him next to himself at dinner, and offering him in case he would stay three cities in Italy.

About this time, I suppose in the same year after Pantulf's return from Apulia, Hugh de Salgei, a stout and resolute knight, killed the countess Mabel, wife of Roger de Montgomery, in her bed; and on account of his intimate familiarity with the assassin, William Pantulf was shrewdly suspected to be accessary to the murder. Here upon earl Roger making seizure of his lands, seeking his life, he fled to Uttica with his wife and sons, and there in great fear remained a long time under the protection of those monks, till at length, thro' the importunity of divers noble persons, it was concluded that he should undergo the severe trial by fire ordeal, that is, that he should purge himself from the guilt of this foul crime, by carrying a piece of iron red hot in his hands; which he did without any hurt; his adversaries looking on, with purpose to cut off his head in case they had found him guilty.

In the reign of William Rufus, William Pantulf went again into Apulia; and at his return brought with him a tooth and two ribs of St. Nicholas, which reliques he gave to the church of St. Peter at Norum, and bestowed thereon likewise the manor

of Tredinton, in England, with the mill, the church, and the titles of all the hamlets thereto belonging.

1102. In the 2nd year of Henry I. Robert de Belesm, earl of Shrewsbury, engaging in a rebellion against the king, required William Pantulf his vassal to aid and assist him with such a number of forces as he was obliged to furnish by his tenure, and upon this refusal, disinherited him of all his lands and possessions in Shropshire. In these circumstances William Pantulf applied himself to the king, who having long descerned him to be a person of great courage, gave him the command of 200 soldiers, and made him governor of Stafford Castle. In this post, he, above all others, by his excursion, annoved the rebellious earl, who, with his brother Arnulph, had committed great spoil in Stafford-And whereas the earl had engaged Cadogan and Gerval, the sons of Rees, prince of Wales on his side; by whose troops joined to his own he frequently got advantages over the king's army; William Pantulf well skilled in negotiation as well as arms, found means by gifts and promises to disengage those princes from his interest, and to bring them over to the king's party. Bridgenorth having surrendered to the king, it was resolved to besiege Shrewsbury. The road to it being bad and narrow,

and the country full of woods, lined with archers; the king employed 6000 foot in cutting down the woods, and opening the roads. William Pantulf attended the king in this expedition. When they came before Shrewsbury, which Roger Corbet, Robert de Nevil, and Ulger Grosveneur held for the earl, the town was summoned to yield in three days, and in case of non-compliance, the king threatened to hang all that he should take therein. Some of the Governors above mentioned, being allied to William Pantulf, made use of his mediation in treating with the king; whereupon a surrender was agreed on, and the keys of the castle were sent to the king by Ralph, abbot of Seys, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury. The earl by his treason having forfeited his honour and estate to the crown. the barony of Wem was henceforth held immediately of the king, and upon that account the lords thereof had a right to sit in the great councils of the realm.

1104. William Pantulf lived to a great age. If we suppose him 32 years old at the conquest, and 70 at his death, it would happen 4th, Henry I. He died beyond sea, for his body was buried in the cloister of the abbey, at Norum. By Leceline his wife, he had four sons, Philip, Robert, Ivo, and Arnulf. He left his lands in Normandy to his

eldest son Philip, and those in England to Robert his second son.

2nd, Robert Pantulf is almost entirely unknown to us. Three of the lists give this place to William; but the first baron had no son of that name, if we may credit Orderieus Vitalis, who lived in these times, and has given the fullest account of this family. He says that Robert succeeded his father in his estate in England. If we suppose him 5 years old at the conquest, he would be 43 at his father's death. The time of his own death is uncertain.

theen the son of Ivo, brother to Robert, and might have been born about 3rd, William II. He married a lady called Bengia, and with her joined in building a priory for 8 benedictine nuns, near Bredin, Leicestershire, valued at the dissolution, at £29.

7s. 4d. ob. 1167. It was certainly before 13th, Henry II. for then Robert, bishop of Lincoln, and Richard, abbot of Leicester died, who attested its confirmation.

1115. 4th, William Pantulf 3rd, was born about 15th, Henry I. He married Alice de Verdon, of the family of the barons, Verdon of Aulston, now Alton, in Staffordshire, by whom he had a son.

1140. 5th, Hugh Pantulf born about 5th Stephen. Dugdale only mentions his name, but what that author says of Hugh Pantulf 2nd, in respect of time, is most applicable to this, viz. 24th, Henry II. 1178. he was amerced for trespassing in the king's forest, in Northamptonshire; that he was sheriff of Shropshire from 26th, Henry II. to 1st, Richard I. inclusive, that upon collection of scutage 5th, Richard I. for the ransom of that king, he paid 40s. for his knight's fees in the county of Stafford. he lived in troublesome times when the great men began to build and fortify their castles, he thought to erect one at Wem, and therefore when he granted the village of Stepe to Richard de Stepe and his heirs for ever, among the services reserved, one was to assist at the building of his castle in Wem, when his other freemen did the same. Among the witnesses to this charter were William Panter, perhaps his own brother, and Robert, Ivo, Allan, and Hugo, It is observable that this surname is written Panter, if it be not a mistake of the transcriber; for I saw not the original but a copy, But such variations were not unusual. This Pantulf was sometimes Pantolf, and sometimes Paunton.

6th, Ivo Pantulf who succeeded his father, might be born about 11th, Henry II. 1165. He distinguished his piety by his benefactions to religious houses. For he gave to the abbey of Shrewsbury

his mill at Sutton, and to the monks of Combermere he gave Bromhall, Shipford, and Clive, in Cheshire. The manor of Stoliston, late the estate of Mathew de Cauches, but then escheated to the crown, was held by this baron of the bailiff of king John, for £14. 4s. per annum. He was succeeded by his son.

1190. 7th, William Pantulf 4th, who might be born about the 1st. Richard I. and so was a minor. about 15 years old when his guardian, Warin Fitzgerold, in 7th, John obtained a grant for a market every week at Wem on sunday, and an annual fair on the eve, the day and the day after the feast of St. Peter. 1216. In 18th John, William Pantulf was one of the barons that held out the castle of Beauvoir, in Lincolnshire, against that At this time the Pantulfs had estates in several counties, acquired by marriage or royal This lord either had no issue, or was deprived of it by untimely death. Being childless he was inclined to charitable donations. Dugdale tells us he was a benefactor to the priory of Stone, in Com Stafford. For he gave to the canons of that monastery the third part of all the tithes of corn and small tithes of his lordship of Cublesdon, in Staffordshire, and two parts of the tithes of hay, orchards, and parsonage. I suppose he died in the beginning of the reign of Henry III. leaving no issue, and therefore he was succeeded by his uncle Hugh.

1124. 7th, Hugh Pantulf 2nd, was the next baron. By his wife Christiana he had a son William to whom his honour and estate fell by his death, 9th, Henry III.

8th, William Pantulf 5th, immediately doing his homage, and giving securities for the payment of £100, for his relief, had livery of his lands lying in the counties of Salop, Stafford, Hereford, and Woscester. 1225. And in the beginning of the next year he was appointed first commissioner for collecting the fifteenth, on moveables in the counties of Stafford and Salop. This year he obtained the king's precept to the barons of his exchequer, for the discharge of the £100. which he owed for his relief; this sum is as much as he paid for his relief, and therefore I suppose it was for his whole estate, and not only for five knights' fees (as Dugdale reports) of the king's escheats, formerly belonging to Robert de Belesm. 1228. In 12th, Henry HI. a perambulation was made to settle the boundaries of the manor of Wem, and that of Prees, which last belonged to the bishop of Coventry and Lichfield. William Pantulf married Harvise, daughter of Fulk Fitz-Warine of Whittington, in Shropshire; by whom he had only a daughter, called Maud or Matilda. 1233. In the 7th Henry III, he departed this life, whereupon his father in law Fulk Warine gave the king 600 marks for the wardship of his

lands and heir, with the benefit of her marriage. This Fulk was one of the barons that in 1214, confederated against king John, and Dec. 16th, 1215, was by name excommunicated by the pope. In 5th, Henry III. he had license to fortify his castle at Whittington, and 48th, Henry III. was drowned at the castle of Lewes, fighting on the part of the king.

2nd, THE BOTELERS.

The head of this family was Radulphus Pincerna, or Ralph Butler of Robert de Bellomont, earl of Mellent and Leicester, who giving him lands of great value at Oversley, in Warwickshire, he built a strong castle there in the reign of Henry I. which was the seat of his posterity till his great grandson.

1st. Ralph de Boteler settled at Wem upon his marriage with Maud, heiress of William Pantulf 4th, I am persuaded that Maud was very young at her father's death, and that 36th, Henry III. she wedded this Ralph, who in 34th and 41st, Henry III. was one of the justices for goal delivery at Warwick. In 40th Henry III. Ralph de Boteler and Maud his wife levied a fine, in order to make improvements in their manor of Wem, which was then held for one knight's fee. 1257. In 41st, Henry III. he had summons to join with Hamonle Strange, for preventing the incursions of the welch in the marshes,

near Montgomery, and in 42nd to attend the king at Chester, on monday preceding the feast of St. John Baptist, well appointed with horse and amour to march against the welch; and 44th to be at Chester on the nativity of the blessed virgin, upon the same account. 1261. In 45th, Henry III. he received command to be at London on the morrow. after Simon and Jude's day, in 47th to be at Worcester on the feast day of St. Peter Advincula, and at Ludlow on the octaves of the purification of our Lady, well fitted with horse and arms to restrain the insolencies of the welch. 1261. In 48th, Henry III. he had summons (with other peers) to attend the king at Oxford in Mid. Lent, to consult about affairs, and thence to advance against Llewellin, prince of Wales and his adherents. At this time divers of the barons had taken up arms against the king, but this Ralph stood so firm to the royal interest, that as a reward for the services he then performed, he had a grant of the lordship of Kineton, in the county of Warwick, part of the possessions of Nicholas de Segrave, bestowed on him by the king to hold during life, upon the same terms as Segrave held it, and by another grant bearing date but three days after he had the inheritance thereof given him. And when Segrave pursuant to the decree of Kinilworth, made redemption of his lands again, and thereupon did repossess. the lordship of Kineton; the king in recompence

thereof, gave to Ralph de Boteler the sum of £400. to be received out of the fines, and amerciaments coming into his exchequer. This baron died 6th Edward I. 1277.

2d. William de Boteler, his son and heir, in his father's life time married Ankaret, the niece of James de Aldithley or Audley, of Red Castle, in the county of Salop. 1278. And 6th, Edward I. doing his homage had livery of the manors of Wem. and Loppington paying his relief. 1282. In 10th. Edward I, inconsideration of his special services, he obtained a grant of the right which the king to the service of three knights' fees due from Maud his mother; upon of the Scutage of Wales. This lady about this time married Walter de Hopton. For in 11th, Edward I. a fine was levied on the manors of Wem, in Shropshire and Tirley, in Staffordshire, to the use of Walter and Maud during the life of Maud, the remainder to the right heirs of Maud. William de Boteler departed this life 12th, Edward I. being then seized of the manor of Northbourough, in Leicestershire, which he held jointly with Anmaret his wife, by the grant of Adam Boteler, and of the manor of Oversley, in Warwickshire, his father's inheritance.

3rd, John de Boteler his son and heir was but 16 years old at his father's death; so Walter de Beau-

champ of Alcester, in Warwickshire, the same year obtained of the king a grant of his marriage on the behalf of Eleanor his daughter, and in case she died before the accomplishment of that intended marriage, that then he might have one other of his daughters; or if the said John should die before marriage, then the said Walter might have the like benefit of his next heir; and so from heir to heir till one of his daughters was wedded to one of the Botelers; or in case such a one should make a different choice, then to have the forfeiture due to the king thereupon. 1287. But this John died within 3 years following, so that whether this marriage was completed is uncertain.

4th, Gawine le Boteler, second son of William, and brother of John succeeded to the barony, and married Alice de Montgomery, who long survived him. He by the king's writ impleaded Walter de Hopton, his stepfather, for waste and destruction made by him in certain lands and tenements which Walter held for term of his life, (or rather his wife's life) of the inheritance of Gawine, in Wymme and Thyrke, (Wem and Tirley) but Gawine died before he obtained judgment, about 18th, Edward I. 1290. For then I find his name in our extent.

5th, William le Boteler 2nd, third son of William 1st, and brother of John and Gawine, being also

under age, John de Britannia obtained of the king the wardship of him and Walter de Langton, lord treasurer of England, and Walter de Beauchamp then steward of the king's household, procured the said wardship of John de Britannia. 1291. ln 19th. Edward I, this William le Boteler revived the suit which his brother Gawine had commenced against Walter de Hopton for waste made by him in lands and tenements of the said William's inheritance. Walter appeared before Gilbert Thornton, and others appointed to hear the king's pleas, and said that he ought not to answer to the said William for the waste and destruction made in the time of another, before the right of the said inheritance descended to him. The justices being divided in their opinions, the matter was brought before the parliament; and in 20th, Edward I. it was by them enacted, that an action of waste is maintainable by the heir for waste done in his ancestor's time, as well as for that done in his own time. assizes held the same year, Walter de Hopton complained by his bill, that Walter de Beauchamp at Pykesley Field, in Hynestoke (now Hinstock, near Drayton) distrained his cattle, and refused to replevy them. Walter de Beauchamp answered that the manor of Hynestoke was a member of the manor of Wem, and that after the death of Gawine le Boteler, by reason of the minority of William le Boteler, his brother and heir, the custody of Wem

fell to the king, who gave it to John de Britannia. and he assigned it to the defendant Walter de Beauchamp, who further pleaded that there was such a custom in the manor of Wem, that the Greth serjeants were to be maintained by the villains of the manor, and because the tenants in villenage, were six pounds in arrears to the Greth serjeants Walter de Hopton replied that the he distrained. said contribution for the support of the Officers aforesaid, was converted to a certain yearly rent or allowance by the ancestors of William de Boteler, and said that he held a moiety of the barony, and was always ready to contribute his proportion, et posuit se super patriam. The business of these Greth serjeants was to keep the peace as their name imports for Grith, signifies peace and serjeant keeper. At the same assizes William le Boteler made his claim, and held a free court in his manor of Wem, and to have a market every week on the Lord's day, and a fair on the eve, the day and the day after the feast of St. Peter and Paul, Apostles. In an account of the fees of the hundred of Bradford, taken in 24th, Edward I. Walter de Hopton is said to hold the manor of Wem with its members. viz. Aston, Steel, Tilliley, Dyoke Low, Horton, Wolverley, Edstaston, Cotton, Harpecote, Beselow, Doddington, Alkington, and Edesley. The three last towns are in the parish of Whitchurch. low in former times was the seat of the Wolriches.

in Wroxeter parish. And Harpecote perhaps is Harcote, in the parish of Stanton. This same year William le Boteler though still in his minority, procured a grant of his lands from his guardians before mentioned, as if he had been of full age, and by their mediation had livery of them from the king. 1298. 26th and 34th. Edward I. he was in the wars of Scotland. 1307. In 35th, Edward I, he gave to the monastery of Alcester (of his great ancestor's foundation) sixty acres of waste ground lying at Hynestone, in Shropshire, with licence to enclose the same, as only the advowson of the church there with common of pasture for 8 oxen, 6 kine, and 200 sheep in his woods and wastes belonging to that lordship. 1314. Moreover in 8th, Edward II. he was again in the Scotish wars, and had summons to parliament amongst the barons of this realm from 24th, Edward I. and 1st, Edward III. inclusive. He had two wives, the first named Ankaret, daughter of Griffin, by whom he had issue William his son and heir: the second Ela, daughter and coheir to Roger de Herdeburgh, by whom he had issue two sons, Edmund and Edward, who both died without issue, as also four daughters, viz. Ankaret, the wife of John le Strange, of Blackmore, Ida of sir Fulk Pemburgge; Alice of Nicholas Longford and Dionesse of Hugh de Coksey. 1334. He died 8th, Edward III. being then seized of the manor of Tirley, in the county of Stafford, and of the manors of

Wem, Doddington, and Hynestoke, in the county of Salop, whereof Alice de Montgomery widow of his elder brother Gawine le Boteler, held a third part in the name of her dowery. After his death according to a settlement made by him, the manor fell to lord Estranges.

6th, Willam le Boteler, third son of the preceding baron was 36 years old at his father's death; he had two wives, Elizabeth Handsacre or Henshaw. and Margaret daughter of Richard Fitz Allan, earl of Arundel, and by each of them a son called William. 1340. In 14th, Edward III. he was in the expedition to Flanders, being of the retinue of Reginald de Cobham. 1344. In 18th, Edward III. through the solicitation of William de Clinton, earl of Huntingdon, he obtained from the king a special immunity, that he should not be compelled to bear arms in respect of his impotency, nor to take upon him the order of knighthood against his will. 20th, Edward III. upon that notable expedition into France, being assessed for his lands in the counties of Salop, Stafford, and Warwick, to find ten men at arms and ten archers, he represented to the king and his counsel, that all the estate whereof he was then possessed amounted to little more than 200 marks per annum, whereupon he got a discharge for six of the men at arms, and for the whole number of archers. And afterwards through

the mediation of William de Clinton, earl of Huntingdon, he obtained a remission of three of the four men at arms. A man at arms was a horseman in complete armour, attended three archers on horseback, a cutler and a servant on foot, for which reason he received pay for six persons, which was at that time 1s. 6d. a day; see company in war Chambers; and Brady 2. 155. Rapin 1. 511.

This baron died on the saturday next preceding Christmas day, in 35th, Edward III. being then seized of the manors of Oversley, in the county of Warwick, Northborough in the county of Leicester, Tirley in the county of Stafford, and Hynestone and Wem in the county of Salop.

7th, William le Boteler 4th, his eldest son upon doing his homage to the king had livery of his lands. He married Elizabeth Holland, and his half-brother William married Joan, eldest of the two sisters, and heir to John, lord Sudley. This William 4th was the last Boteler of Wem, for he had no issue but Elizabeth, his sole daughter and heir. He died on the 14th of August, being the Eve of the Assumption of the blessed Virgin, 1369. in 43rd, Edward III. being then seized of the manors of Northborough, in the county of Leicester, Oversley, and Merston, in the county of Warwick, Tirley in the county of Stafford, Wem, Hynestoke, and

Loppington, with the hamlet of Drayton Parva, in the county of Salop. In 1663 the arms of the Botelers were in the east window of the south isle in Wem church, whence a draught of them was then taken by Mr. Ashmole, and from his M. S. S. communicated to me by Mr. Mytton.

3rd, THE FERRERS.

1st. Elizabeth Boteler at the time of her father's death, was 24 years of age. 1370. In 44th, Edward III. she had livery of the lands of her inheritance, the homage being respited. This same year she married sir Robert Ferrers, knight, (in Latia de Ferrariis, of the iron mines) a younger son of Robert. lord Ferrers of Chartley, in Staffordshire, and thereupon levied a fine by which she entailed the manors of Wem, Loppington, Hynestoke, Oversley, and some others on her husband for his life, the remainder to the right heirs of their bodies, and in default of such issue to her right heirs for ever. 1373. In 47th, Edward III. this Robert was in the expedition then made into France in the retinue of John, duke of Lancaster; and in 49th of that reign doing his homage, had livery of all these lands, which by the death of Joan, his mother, whose heir he was, descended to him. The same year (and afterwards) he had summons to parliament by the

name and title of Robert Ferrers, de Wem, chevalier. 1378. In 2d, Richard II. he joined with his lady in another fine on the manors above mentioned, with the same remainders as the former. 1380. In 4th, Richard II. he died, leaving issue Robert his son and heir, four years of age.

1381. In 5th, Richard II. his relict Elizabeth, who stiled herself baroness of Wem, married John de Say, and in the 7th of that reign the said John de Say and Elizabeth his wife levied a fine on the manors of Wem, Loppington, and Hynestoke, half of the manor of Frankton, some lands in Shrewsbury, and the advowson of the church of Wem.

1392. 2nd, In 16th, Richard II. Robert her son by lord Ferrers being then I6 years old, married Joan or Jane Beaufort, daughter of John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, by his third wife Catharine Swinford. The issue of this marriage were two daughters, Elizabeth born 17th, Richard II. and Mary the next year. This Robert died in the life time of his mother, and Joan his widow married Ralph Nevil, the first earl of Westmoreland, and died November 13th, 1440.

John de Say being dead, the lady Elizabeth Ferrers took for her third husband Sir Thomas Molington, knight. And 22nd, Richard II. they

joined in levying a fine on the manors of Wem, Loppington, and Hynestoke, &c. to the use of them and their heirs. This Thomas Molington was stiled baron of Wem. Sir Thomas according to his will dated 1408, was buried in the chapel of St. Mary, within the college of the Crutched Friars, The lady Elizabeth survived him, made London. her will Jan. 6th, Henry IV. wherein she stiled herself Elizabeth Ferrers, baroness of Wem, retaining the name of that husband, who was of the best quality; and bequeathed her body to be buried in the church of the Crutched Friars, near that of her husband, and £6. sterling to the building of a cloister there; appointing that all her vessels, except what she had particularly disposed of, should be employed for the health of her soul, and the souls of Robert Ferrers and Thomas Molington, her first 1411. In the same year on and third husbands. friday next ensuing the feast of the nativity of St. John the Baptist, she departed this life, leaving Elizabeth and Mary, daughters of her son Robert, her next heirs; Elizabeth being then 18, and Mary 17 years of age. Elizabeth married John, eldest son and heir of Ralph, lord Greystock, and Mary married Ralph Nevil, a younger son of Ralph, earl of Westmorland.

4th, THE GREYSTOCKS.

1st, The principal seat of the noble family of the Greystocks was at Greystock Castle, on the banks

of the Peteril, in the county of Cumberland. Upon a division of the Ferrers' lands, John Grevstock had for his share the manor of Norburgh, in Leicester, and the manors of Wem, Loppington, and Hynestoke. April 6th, 5th Henry V. he succeeded his father in honor and estate, being then 28 years of age. 1422. In 9th, Henry V. he was appointed governor of Roseborough Castle, in Scotland, for the space of four years next ensuing the feast of Easter, with an allowance of £1000. per annum in times of peace. and £2000. in time of war. Henry VI, he was joined in commission with the bishop of London and others, to treat with James, king of Scotland, or his embassadors, about a firm peace betwixt both realms. 1432. In 11th, Henry VI. he, the earl of Northumberland and others were appointed commissioners, to treat with the Scots at Hadenstank, and to make satisfaction for certain injuries done to the subjects of Scotland against the form of the truce concluded on between the two crowns. And the next year he was joined with Richard earl of Salisbury, and others, to treat with the Scotish commissioners on the like occa-1434. In 13th, Henry VI. he was one of the chief commanders of those forces which were sent to the relief of Berwick, upon Tweed, then beseiged by the Scots. He had summons to parliament from 7th, Henry V. till 12, Henry VI. By his testament bearing date 12th July, 14th, Henry VI. he

bequeathed his body to be buried at the Collegiate church, at Grevstock; to which church he gave all his habiliments of war, all his new vestments, with the ornaments thereto belonging, as also his horse for a mortuary. To Ralph his son and heir he gave all his household goods in his manor, houses at Hinderskelf, Morpeth, and Greystock, his plate and To Elizabeth his wife, he left a jewels excepted. ring with a saphire and a diamond. As for his three younger sons, Thomas, Richard, and William, he devised to each of them four marks yearly for their maintenance for term of their respective lives; to every gentleman serving him, 40s. to every yeoman, 20s. and to every groom, 13s., 4d. and to the repair of Newminster Abbey, £20. of which testament he constituted Ralph his son and heir his executor, and upon the 8th August next ensuing departed this life, being then seized of fourteen manors in the counties of Northampton, Bedford, Westmorland, Cumberland, Northumberland, York, and Salop.

2d Ralph, lord Greystock was 22 years of age at his father's death, and the same year had livery of his lands, his homage being respited. 1449. In 27th, Henry VI. he, John viscount Beaumont and others were ordered to treat with the commissioners of Scotland about a truce. 1452. In 30th, Henry VI. he managed a negotiation with James Douglas

upon certain articles. In 3rd and 5th, Edward IV. he with the Scotish commissioners examined such inquiries as had been done by the subjects of either kingdom, contrary to the truce formerly made. 10th, 12th, and 13th, Edward IV. he was employed in a like commission. 1482. In 22nd, Edward IV. he attended the duke of Glouster, who next year mounted the throne by the name of Richard III. in his expedition against Scotland, where the English took Berwick and Edinburgh. He had summons to parliament from 15th, Henry VI. to 1st, His wife was Elizabeth, Henry VII. inclusive. daughter of lord William Fitzburgh, for marrying whom he had a special dispensation, in regard they were within the 3rd and 4th degrees of consanguini-By her he had two sons, Robert who married Elizabeth, daughter of Edmund, lord Grey of Ruthin; and died before his father, 18th July, 1st, Richard III. and John, who living 8th, Henry VII. Ralph, lord Greystock their father departed this life 1st June, 2d, Henry VII. leaving his granddaughter Elizabeth sole issue of his eldest son Robert his heir; which Elizabeth 22nd, Henry VII. had special livery of all his lands, and the same year married Thomas, lord Dacre, he likewise had fivery of inheritance, sir Gilbert Talbot was high steward of Wem in the reigns of Henry VII. Henry VIII.

5th. THE DACRES.

1st, The principal seat of the Dacres of the north. was Dacre Castle, about five miles distant from that of Greystock, in the county of Cumberland. Thomas, lord Dacre upon his marriage with Elizabeth, heir general of the Greystocks was baron of Gillesland, Grevstock, and Wem. In 1st, Henry VIII. he was constituted warden of the west marches. In the 5th of that reign he commanded a body of horse, which was appointed as a reserve in the memorable battle of Flodden, in which king James IV. of Scotland lost his life. Coming in seasonably with those troops, he very much contributed to the victory then obtained by the earl of Surry. 14th, Henry VIII. he marched to Scotland with about 500 men, and proclaimed on the borders, that if the Scots made not peace with the king by the 1st of march next ensuing, it should be to The same year with the lord Ross, he their peril. burnt the town of Kelsey, and eighty villages, and overthrew eighteen towers of stone, with all their bulwarks, but at length through the intercession of queen Margaret, he had a conference with the duke of Albany, which produced a truce. In 15th, Henry VIII. when the earl of Surry invaded Scotland, this lord won the castle of Femihurst. Upon the old ruins at Drumburgh (near the midway between Boulness and Burgh, upon the Sands)

in the county of Cumberland, he built a little castle for the defence of the country, for the structure whereof he took the stones of the Picts' wall, which is near to it. He was knight of the garter, warden of the marches, and had been summoned to parliament from 1st, Henry VIII. till his death, which happened October 24th, 17th, Henry VIII. His wife died nine years before him.

2nd, William, lord Dacre, eldest son of the preceding lord in 17th, Henry VIII. had special livery of all his lands of his inheritance. 1530. In 22nd of this reign, he was one of the great men that signed a menacing letter to the pope. 1533. In 25th, Henry VIII. he had a dispute with the lord Morley about precedence; which being brought before the house of lords, was determined in favour of his opponent. In 26th, Henry VIII. being accused of treason by sir Ralph Fenwick and one Musgrave, for holding correspondence with the Scots, and being tried at Westminster the 9th July, he was acquitted by his peers, because the witnesses were Scots of mean condition, who were thought to be suborned, and to speak maliciously against him in regard of his severity to them as warden of the 1536. In 28th, Henry VIII. he was one marches. of the twenty-seven peers commissioned to try queen Ann Boleyn, and her brother, the lord Rochford. The same year being supposed to be

disgusted at the government, on account of his late trial, he was solicited to join with Robert Ashe and his adherents in the Yorkshire rebellion, called, the Pilgrimage of Grace, occasioned by dissolution of the lesser monastaries; but he not only refused, but is supposed the first that sent the king notice of the plot. 1542. On the 25th Nov. 34th, Henry VIII. this lord Musgrave and sir Thomas Warton commanded the 500 men, that at Solway defeated 1548. In 1st, Edward VI. in the ex-1500 Scots. pedition against Scotland, he commanded the rear ward, consisting of 3000 foot. The next year he was one that protested against the new liturgy. 1549. In 3rd, Edward VI. being then warden of the west marches, and governor of Carlisle, he was of those lords that dissented from the bill permitting marriage to the clergy. In 5th, Edward VI. he was sent to the Tower, charged with being privy to the duke of Somerset's practices. All the reign of Mary he was still warden of the west marches, and governor of Carlisle. Upon the demise of that queen, he was one of the lords that by order of council, on the 21st Nov. was summoned to conduct queen Elizabeth to London. 1559. Next year being governor of the castle at Carlisle, and lord deputy of the west marches, he sent 100 hagbutlers to the frontiers of Scotland, and waited on the queen and council for directions. 1560. In 2nd Elizabeth, he was one of the commissioners that concluded a

peace with Scotland. June 29th, in 3rd of that reign, from his house in London, he sent a commission or warrant directed to John Dacre, rector of Greystock and Wem, Robert Whitley, Thomas Ansel, and Thomas Salter, to take an account and estimate of all woods, messuages, tenements, and lands in his manors of Wem, Loppington, and Hinstock, by a verdict or presentment of proper juries. The tenements of each manor were also to produce the tithes, charters, or copies, whereby they held their estates. In 6th Elizabeth, he produced an inquisition by a court of survey into the customs of his manors of Wem. Before the end of this year, he departed this life, leaving issue by his wife Elizabeth, who was the fifth daughter of George, earl of Shrewsbury, three sons, Thomas, Leonard, and Francis.

3rd, Thomas, lord Dacre, who succeeded his father, was married to Elizabeth, second daughter of sir James Leiburne, of Tunswicke, in the county of——by whom he had a son George, and three daughters. 1366. This lord died 8th Elizabeth, and his widow soon after married Thomas, duke of Norfolk, for her second husband.

4th, George, lord Dacre being a minor, Thomas, duke of Norfolk obtained the wardship of him; but had not enjoyed it long before this young lord

came to an untimely end. For on 17th May, 11th Elizabeth, at Thetford, in the county of Norfolk. he was killed by the fall of a wooden horse, whereupon he practised to leap; so that his three sisters became his heirs, to the great discontentment of their uncle Leonard, whose power in the northern counties was so great, that he kept possession of a considerable part of their patrimony. But he the next year rebelling against the queen, and being defeated by the lord Hunsdon, fled to Scotland, and left the whole estate about £2200. per annum to his They were so great fortunes that their guardian Thomas, duke of Norfolk designed to marry them to his three sons; and this design took effect in relation to two of them. For Ann married Philip, earl of Arundel: and Elizabeth married the lord, William Howard, but Mary died unmarried, probably before she was of age to marry.

6th, THE HOWARDS.

Thomas, duke of Norfolk buried his third wife Elizabeth relict of Thomas, lord Dacre, in 1567. In October the next year he had formed the project of marrying Mary, queen of Scots. On the 2nd June, 15th Elizabeth, he was beheaded for his ill conduction in relation to that queen, which his peers adjudged to be treason. By his attainder,

his eldest son Philip having lost his titles of honour that were to have descended to him from his father, assumed the stile of earl of Arundel in right of his mother, who was daughter to Henry Fitz Allan, the last earl of Arundel of that family. For it had been anciently determined in parliament that the earldom of Arundel was a local dignity, and consequently, that the owner of Arundel Castle should enjoy the title of earl of Arundel. By this title he was summoned to the next parliament, begun at Westminster 23rd Jan. 23rd Elizabeth, in which parliament he was restored in blood, and to the possession of his paternal estate. After the death of Thomas, duke of Norfolk, the manor court in Wem was held in the name of William Dyxe and William Dantrel, Esqrs. who are stiled sometimes lords of the manor, sometimes trustees. On the division of the great inheritance of the Dacres, the barony of Wem fell to the share of the eldest sister, the lady Ann Dacre, who carried it by marriage to

Ist Philip, earl of Arundel, April 6th, 25th Elizabeth, the court was first called in the name of Phillip, earl of Arundel and Surry, and of the lady Ann his wife, who this year sold the moiety eight messuages in Wem, to Edward Carel, Esq. and heirs for ever, having conveyed the other moiety of those messuages to Roger Gifford, and his heirs four years before. The earl of Arundel was educated a

protestant, but in 1581 was perverted to the church He was irreproachable in his morals, of Rome. austere in his life, and a bigot in his religion. zeal for popery, his great quality and fortune, and the resentments he was supposed to entertain for the hard usage of his family, rendered him suspected by the government, which 27th Elizabeth, took an uncommon way of trying his loyalty; forged letters from the queen of Scots were left at his house, which he must either bring to a secretary of state, or discover his guilt by concealing them. He fell into this snare, and was for six months confined to his house, but upon three strict examinations before the council, nothing else appeared against him. The queen offered his liberty if he would carry the sword of state before her, and be present at the service in her chapel, but he refused it. Some intercepted letters of the Jesuits magnified this constancy in such terms as increased the queen's suspicion, and he was sent to the Tower. He was however restored to liberty, and 23rd Nov. when the parliament met, he came to the house of lords, but withdrew the same day, that he might not be present at the summon. Parry's conspiracy against the life of the queen of Scots, inducing parliament to confirm the associations made for her defence, and to enact a severe statute against popish priests and jesuits, the entertainers and concealers of them, he was so terrified, that he resolved to fly beyond

the seas, and to acquaint the queen with his reasons. This he did in a bold but affectionate letter, which was not to be delivered till after his departure. In this letter he complains of the queen's displeasure, the malice of his enemies, the persecutions he had suffered, the hard fate of his three immediate ancestors, and the rigour of the laws against the Roman catholics: he declares that he was determined to quit the kingdom, but not his allegiance to his sovereign, and concludes with beseeching God from the bottom of his heart to send her majesty as great happiness as he wished to his own soul. But while this letter lay upon the table, and he was waiting for a ship on the coast of Sussex, he was betrayed by his servants to the government, and on 25th April, committed to the Tower. After he had continued there a little above a year, on the 17th May, he was arraigned in the Star Chamber. The charge brought against him was, that he had relieved and supported popish priests contrary to law; that he held correspondence with cardinal Allan and the jesuit parsons; the queen's enemies, and that in a writing he had accused the justice of the realm, and attempted to go beyond the seas without licence. He professed his loyalty to the queen, and love to his country, excused his ignorance of the laws, pleaded his zeal for divine contemplations, and submitted himself to the court, which for his misdemeanors, comdemned him to imprisonment during the queen's

pleasure, and fined him in £10,000. a sum he was not able to pay, on account of the vast debts he had contracted to the amount of £17,798. whereas the total of his revenue was £4987. per annum. Most of the catholics in England joined the protestants in opposing the Spanish Invasion; but the earl of Arundel was in a foreign interest, and would have been pleased to see the conquest of his country by the Spanish armada. When it got any advantage on the English coast he would be merry, when it met with ill success he was pensive and sorrowful, when it was entirely dispersed and defeated, he said "We are all undone," the king of Spain cannot provide such an armament again these five or six years. For his conduct on this and other occasions, he was tried for his life on the 18th April, next year before 24 of the peers, the earl of Derby being high steward. The substance of his indictment was, that he had been reconciled to the church of Rome contrary to the statute, which made it high treason; that he engaged to assist cardinal Allan in his attempts to re-establish popery, that 24th April, 27th of the queen's reign he intended to withdraw himself beyond sea, to serve under the duke of Parma against this country; that he had procured the bull of Pope Sixtus V. against the queen, and solicited the Spanish invasion; that in the Tower on the 21st July, in the 30th of her Majesty's reign, he did suggest that the queen was an heretic, and unfit to

govern the realm; that he procured William Bennett a seminary priest to say mass, whereat he himself assisted, for the success of the Spanish armada against England; that he prevailed on sir Thomas Gerrard and divers others, then prisoners in the tower, to join in such masses; and that he composed a prayer to be daily used among them for the same purpose. After the indictment was read, the earl pleaded not guilty, and the lawyers opened the charge against him. His practice and confession proved that he had been reconciled to the church of Rome. His intercepted letters shewed that he had excited Allan to promote the catholic cause, and promised himself to perform anything which Allan himself should think fit for him to do. His intention to serve the duke of Parma appeared That he was a procurer from his own confession. of the Pope's bull, and of the Spanish invasion, was asserted in a book published by cardinal Allan. His praying and getting mass said for the Spanish armada, rested on the depositions of sir Thomas Gerrard, Mr. Shelley, Bennett the priest, and divers The earl called for his accusers face to face; which at last was granted him, 'They persisted in their evidence, and he as strongly denied Bennett in particular openly denied that he had written a letter to the earl, expressing his remorse for having in hopes of pardon, and for fear of the torture, accused him falsely of having mass

said for the success of the Spanish invasion. lord Grev and Norris asked Bennett whether he did know of the letter? Bennett confessed he had been moved to such a matter, but he did not. was written by Randel, by the advice of the earl of Arundel. In the course of the trial it was given in evidence that the queen of Scots thought the earl of Arundel to be a fit man to be the head of the catholics; that the traitor Throgmorton had set down his name first in the catalogue of the noblemen and gentlemen that effected the catholic cause, that in his letter to queen Elizabeth, he said, that his grandfather was condemned for such trifles, as the people standing by were amazed at, and that the proceedings against his father were unfair; that in his trunk was found a picture, on one side of which was represented a hand bitten by a snake, shaking the snake into the fire, with this motto "If God be for us, who can be against us? On the other side was painted a lion with claws, the motto was " Yet still a Lion." But on these matters no great'stress was laid. The earl in his answer acknowledged that he had kept up some correspondence with Allan about the advancement of the catholic religion; that he had some thoughts of serving under the duke of Parma, as many had done with the queen's approbation; that he had said nothing of his grandfather's and father's sentence, but what was upon record, that he would not be answerable for what had

been written concerning him by cardinal Allan, the queen of Scots or Throgmorton; and that Popham the attorney-general had managed the letters and confessions against him as spiders do flowers, by extracting nothing from them but poi-Lastly, he excepted against the witnesses, some of which were attainted, some indicted, all bad men, whose words did not deserve credit. Popham answered that they were not tortured, but had confessed willingly, and that they were such as he had favoured with his company. The earl being withdrawn, his peers found him guilty; whereupon he intreated their lordships to intercede with the queen for the payments of his debts, that he might confer with his officers and his wife, and see his infant son, born, since his imprisonment. Then judgdement being pronounced against him, he said, Fiat voluntas Dei. His estate being thus forfeited, the barony of Wem was in the crown during the remainder of his life. The earl was carried back to the Tower, where he applied himself to his dovotions, and to an austere course of life, till after several reprieves; he died a natural death, 19th Nov. 38th Elizabeth. He was a very tall man, of somewhat swarthy complexion, at this time not full forty years of age,

May 26th, 31st Elizabeth, the court at Wem was first called in the name of that queen, on account

of the attainder of Phillip, earl of Arundel and Surry. The queen received the profits of the manors of Wem, Loppington, and Hinstock, and granted leases for terms of years. Thus for an annual rent £11.18s. She set to Robert Causefield, gent. Brockhurst Wood and Northwood Spring, in the manor of Wem, and Graysley Wood in the manor of Hinstock for twenty-one years, if the premises should so long continue in her hands. For her high steward she retained Richard Corbet, esq. who in 1588 had succeeded Lawrence Bannistre of Wem, esq. in that office. Edward Bridgeman, gentlman, acted as his deputy.

As Philip, earl of Arundel had held the barony and manor of Wem in right of his wife, by his attainder he forfeited them only during his own life, so that on his decease they reverted to the countess Dowager Ann, 1596, Oct. 7th, 38th Elzabeth, the court was called in the name of the right honourable lady Ann, countess of Arundel, as without doubt it had been called since the beginning of that year. 1608. In July 6th, James I. sir George Mainwaring, of Ightfield, was her high steward; Edward Bridgeman, gentleman, recorder; and Richard Ward, of Cotton, deputy steward. 1st, 21st James I. she had the same high steward; but then Arthur Ward, of Cotton, was his deputy; and Richard Jebb was deputy of William Spycer, gentleman, recorder. About the end of this

reign, or the beginning of next, a petition was addressed to the lady Ann, countess Dowager, of Arundel, by the overseers of the poor of the parish of Wem, and divers inhabitants of the said parish and manor, humbly shewing that the manor and parish of Wem was overcharged with divers poor cottagers, who by reason of their long abode there could not be removed (most of them dwelling upon her lands) and placed there by her officers heretofore to work in her woods, and that now her work being done they were in most miserable want the last winter, and had not her work in the pool relieved a number of the poor, they, their wives, and their children had liked to have been starved: that her work is now done, and the parish and manor grown poor, and not able to relieve them; therefore requesting that it may please her honour to give some allowance for their relief; so the petitioners, the poor, their wives and children would be ever bound to pray for her health in this world, and in the world to come eternal glory. 1629. June 11th, 5th Charles I. the court was still called in her name, and so continued till her death, which happened in a very short time; for three years after this her son was baron of Wein, and she was now about seventy years old.

2nd, Thomas Howard, her only son by Philip, earl of Aundel, was born after his father's confinement

in the Tower, being about ten years old at his father's death. When James I. acceded to the crown of England, he extremely caressed the Howard family, who had suffered so much on account of his mother in the last reign. In his first parliament this Thomas was restored in blood, with the title of earl of Arundel and Surry, and put in possession of the baronies that had been forfeited by his grandfather's attainder. Thus he had a great fortune by descent, and a much greater with his wife Alothea, who was the sole daughter upon the matter (for neither of her two elder sisters left any issue) of the great house of Shrewsbury. In 1611 he was made knight of the garter, after which he travelled into Italy, where he lived with his family three years. In 1621 he was ordered to the Tower by the house of lords, for an affront offered to the lord Spencer as he was speaking in parliament. August 19th, the same year he was created earl marshal of England for life, with a pension of £2000. per anuum. In 1626 a little before the coronation of Charles I. he was joined in a commission with William, earl of Pembroke, to make such persons knights of the Bath, as the king should think fit to call to that dignity. In March, the same year the parliament sitting, he was sent to the Tower by the king, and notwithstanding the repeated petitions of the house of lords, he was confined there till the beginning of June.

1632. August 23rd, 8th Charles I. a court baron was called in the name of the right honourable Thomas, earl of Arundel and Surry, Premier, earl of England, lord Howard, Fitz-Allan, Maltravus, Mowbray, Segrave, Bruse, and Wem, earl marshal of England, knight of the most noble order of the garter, and one of the lords of the king's honourable His high steward was sir Richard privy council. Newport, knight, who was afterwards created Newport of High Ercal, and his deputy steward was Thomas Bromhall, of Northwood Hall, gentleman. 1633. In 9th Charles I. he was constituted chief justice of all the forests north of Trent. ber 29th, 11th Charles I. he brought Thomas Parr to court, who was 152 years old. 1686. March 19th, the next year he obtained of the crown a charter, for an annual fair to be held at his borough of Wem, on St. Mark's day, to last one day. September 1636 he was sent embassador extraordinary to the Emperor of Germany. In 15th year of the same reign he was made general of the army, which was to act against the Scots. He had neither genius nor experience suitable to that command; but he was of that high rank, that no man could decline serving under him. He sat as lord high steward of England at the famous trial of Thomas Wentworth, earl of Strafford; and was one of the three commissioners appointed by the king to pass the bill for the execution of that earl, and another bill for perpetuating

Shortly after this having a view that parliarment. of the civil war beginning in England, he resigned his staff of lord steward of the household: and Angust 16th, 17th Charles I. conveyed his barony of Wem with the manors of Wem, Loppington, and Hinstock to certain trustees. Resolving to travel, he soon found a fair opportunity. For the queen mother of France having been in England above two years, was at this time necessitated to return; and the care of conducting her to the sea side, and waiting on her over was committed to this earl, who spent the summer at Utrecht, but in the winter returned Jan. 22nd, 1643--4, when the king's to England. parliament met at Oxford, he was beyond the seas: but not long after attended the king there, For by patent dated at Oxford, June 6th, 9th Charles 1. he was honoured with the title of earl of Norfolk. After which he obtaining leave of the king to travel, he retired to Padua, in Italy, and there departed this life, September 14th, 1646, in the sixty-first year of his age.

His character is very singular, as it is drawn by the earl of Clarendon. In his person, his aspect, and countenance, his gait and motion he had the appearance of a great man. He wore a habit very different from that of the time, such as men had only beheld in the pictures of the most considerable men. This was only his outside; for he was natu-

rally disposed to levity and delights, which were despicable and childish. He was willing to be thought a scholar and antiquary, because he had made a costly purchase of excellent statues, and the most curious medals; but in all parts of learning he was almost illiterate. His expenses were without any measure, and always exceeded very much his revenue. He was generally supposed to be a proud man; lived much within himself, conversed chiefly with strangers, and affected most to imitate the humours and manners of the Italians. He went somtimes to court, because there only was a greater man than himself, and for that reason he went thither but seldom. He was rather thought to have no concern for religion, than to incline to any party; and had little other affection for the nation, that as he had a great share in it, and therefore he withdrew as soon as the repose of it was disturbed. Echard says he died under the suspicion of the Roman religion; whence we may infer, that he had professed himself a protestant.

Collins asserts that he was more learned in men and manners than in books, yet that he understood the latin tongue very well, and was master of the Italian; that he was a favourer of learned men, and the greatest encourager of painting, sculpture, designs, carving, and building that the age produced; that he employed persons many years in Italy,

Greece, &c. to collect rarities for him: that his stastues and paintings were equal in number, value and antiquity to those in the houses of most princes; that he was a great master of order and ceremony, sumptuous in his plate and household stuff, stately and magnificent in his entertainments, especially of strangers, and at his table very free and pleasant. The Marmora Arundeliana will eternize his memory. These marbles collected from the ruins of the cities of Greece and Asia, and given by his grandson, Henry Howard, to the university of Oxford, do entertain and instruct the antiquary and chronologer.

1641. August 16th, 17th Charles I. the right honourable Thomas, earl of Arundel and Surry; the countess of Alethea; Henry, lord Mowbray, and Maltravers, their son and heir apparent; sir Henry Bedingfield, of Oxborough, in the county of Norfolk, knight; and Cornwallis, of Earls-Soham, in the county of Suffolk, esq. conveyed the barony of Wem, Loppington, and Hinstock, with the advowson of the church of Wem to Lionel, earl of Middlesex, Henry, lord Pierpoint, afterwards earl of Kingston upon Hull, Edward, lord Newburgh, sir William Playters, and Richard Onslow, and their heirs, as trustees of Thomas, earl of Arundel.

After the death of lord Newburgh, and the earl of Middlesex, 1645; the earl of Kingston released

all his right and title to the premises, so that the whole estate there was vested in Playters and Onlow, in whose name the court was called for about twenty years, and by whose authority many estates in the manor of Wem were infranchised with a reservation of a small rent to them, their heirs, or assigns, lords of the said manor. On this account, some memoirs of them may be acceptable to those who derive from them the freehold of their estates.

7th, THE PLAYTERS AND ONSLOW.

The Playters were an ancient family, seated at Satterley, in the county of Suffolk. Thomas Playters, esq. was high sheriff of Suffolk in 1605, knighted at Newmarket 1606, and advanced to the dignity of baronet, 21st James 1. sir William Playters, his eldest son was knighted in the life time of his father, and on his death in 1638, succeeded him in estate and honours. About 1615, he married Frances, the daughter and heir of Christopher le Grys, of Billingford, in Norfolk, esq. by whom he had only one son, Thomas Playters, esq. a great traveller and commander, who raised a regiment of curassiers of 500 horse for the king, his commission being dated at Oxford, 29th June, 19th Charles I. and was high sheriff of Suffolk, by commission, from the same king, in the 22nd year of his reign.

Sicily he had the command of six English ships, commissioned by Don John, of Austria, his commission dated at Messina, 26th April, 1650; but next year he died in that city, about thirty-five years old. September 9th, 1659, his mother leaving no issue. died at Billingford Hall. Sir William Playters himself, at the time he was made lord of the manor of Wem, was one of the deputy lieutenants and vice admiral of the county of Suffolk; justice of the peace and quorum, and colonel of a regiment of foot; but in a few years he was turned out of all by the rebellious parliament, and in the course of the war, and during the usurpation of Cromwell, suffered much in his fortune, and was reduced to great hardships: however he lived to see the restoration of the king, and of better times, but did not enjoy this happiness long before he departed this life. The last court called in his name, was in the beginning of the year 1662. He was succeeded in honour and estate by his half brother Lionel, whose descendant sir John Playters, now (1748) lives at Satterley Hall.

The Onslows take their name and original from the lordships of Onslow, within the liberty of the town of Shrewsbury. Sir Richard Onslow resided at West Clandon, in the county of Surry. His eldest brother Thomas died 14th James I. and on the inquisition taken after his death, Richard Onslow was

found to be his heir, and then of the age of fifteen years and a half. He was knighted by king James I. at Theobalds, 2nd June, 1624; and in the reign of king Charles I. served in three several parliaments for the county of Surry. In the long parliament he and his eldest son Arthur represented the town of In Cromwell's third parliament, he was one of the committee to persuade him to take the title of king, November 8th, 1658. In the county rolls he is stiled lord Onslow, as being one of the sixty favourites of Cromwell, by him summoned to meet 20th January this year, to sit in the other He likewise sat in the upper house of house. the protector Richard, 22nd April, 1659. Richard's parliament being dissolved, sir Richard Onslow lost his title and precedence. For in the court held November 7th, 1659, he is stiled only knight, and ranked after sir William Playters. He was early let into the secret of the king's restoration, as may be presumed from his close friendship with sir Anthony Ashley Cooper, (afterwards earl of Shaftsbury) and from his being one of the council of state which preceded that event. In the parliament which voted the king's return, he and his son Arthur were again elected for Guilford. was Elizabeth, daughter of Arthur Strangeways, esq. by whom he had fourteen children. He died in the year 1664, about sixty-three years old. Onslow and the speaker of the present parliament

(1748) are descended from him. Under Playters and Onslow, John Cotes, esq. was high steward. Richard Warner, gent. and afterwards Richard Jebb, gent. were under stewards and recorders.

1665. July 17th, Charles II. Thomas Howard, duke of Norfolk, grandson of Thomas, late earl of Arundel, and the trustees of that earl, sir William Turner, Arthur' Onslow, and John Tasborough, esqrs. sold the barony of Wem, and the manors of Wem and Loppington, with the advowson or patronage of Wem church to Daniel Wycherley, gent.

8th, WYCHERLEY.

Mr. Daniel Wycherley born to little or no estate, had the good fortune to enter into the service of John Paulet, marquis of Winchester, who made him his steward. The marquis, distinguished equally by his loyalty and his sufferings in the royal cause, at last by reason of his age or misfortunes, lost his undersanding, and grew quite childish. This rendered Mr. Wycherley in a manner, master of his vast estate, out of which, he remitted considerable sums of money to king Charles II. in his exile. Upon this account, after the restoration, he was personally known to the king, who granted him a patent to continue in his stewardship; and

so powerfully protected him, that notwithstanding he was obnoxious to the relations of the marquis, all their efforts to remove him were vain and fruitless. During this sunshine of fortune, he acquired immense riches; built a hall for his residence at Clive, and bought estates to the amount of £560. per annum, exclusive of his manors of Wem and Loppington.

1640. About 16th Charles I. his eldest son was born, who proved one of the greatest wits, and most eminent comic poets that England has produced.

1665. August 7th, 17th Charles II. a small court baron was held in the name of Daniel Wycherley, gent. Richard Jebb being his steward. Mr. Jebb was succeeded in his office of under steward by Mr. Hesketh. Counsellor Barret was high steward.

As Mr. Wycherley had purchased the manor, he was for making the most of it by multiplying surrenders, and augmenting fines and amerciaments. This gave great uneasiness to the borough-holders and copyholders, who looked upon it as an intollerable oppression. However they bore it eight years before they thought fit to seek redress by law.

1673. In the term of St. Michael, 25th Charles II. forty-three copyholders and borough-holders in the

manor of Wem, exhibited their bill in the court of exchequer against John Wycherley. Their names were William Allipson; William Menlove, of the Foxholes; Lewis Bevan, of Tilley; Richard Allan, of Horton; Richard Higginson, of the Drawwell, in Wem; William Felton, of the Low; George Tyler, of Darliston; John Tyler, of Prees; William Tyler, Adam Tyler, and William Moody, of Horton: Samuel Shenton, near to the Ditches; John Pay, of the Low; Rowland Dickin, of Panton's Hill; William Forgham, of Wem; James Forgham, of the Low; Samuel Barnes, Edward Barnes, and Relph Barnes, of Wem; Robert Higginson, of Tilley; John Higginson, of the Ash-house, in Edstaston; Robert Hotchkiss, Roger Chidloe, and John Hodgkis, of Cotton: Roger Hussy and Randolph Hanmer, of Horton; Pierce Roderick and Richard Pidgeon, of Wem; Richard Wells, of Edstaston; Allan Sher, rat and John Wood, of Cotton; Richard Jebb, of Wem; Arthur Calcot, John Davyes, and John Holgate, of Cotton; Richard Gibbons; Roger Lyth, of the Pool Head, in Edstaston; Arthur Hinks, of the Moathouse, in Aston; William Adderley; Margaret Adams, widow; Ann Adams, widow, of the Woods house, in Tilley; Mary Barnes, widow, of Wom; and - Harwood, widow, of Edstaston,

In their bill they set forth that there were, and time beyond memory, had been several usages and

customs in the said manor, which tended to the regulating, and settling the respective interests of the lords and tenants, mneteen of which customs they particularly recite, affirming that they had been allowed by queen Elizabeth, and by the Botelers, and other lords of the said manor, and also that they had been found by several inquisitions and commissioners, authorized to inquire into the same, but that the defendant did refuse to admit of the said customs, and combining with several others, did destroy all the copies of estates and customs of the said manor: that he assessed unreasonable fines for admittances; seized the tenants' estates till payment, sat in court, returned juries, made his own servants affeerors to enhance amerciaments, exacted rents and heriots from poor men where none were due, and concealed the court rolls, so that the plain! tiffs could not have the benefit thereof. Against which to have relief was the scope of their bill.

The defendant answered, that he half been inflormed, and had reason to believe that a great part of the presentments, court rolls, and evidences of the said manor had been taken away, and embezzled by the fraud of the complainants and others heretofore, tenants, stewards, and under officers of the said manor; that he being a late purchaser of it; and ignorant of the customs, the complainants endeavement to establish for their own ends new pretend-

ed customs, to the prejudice and disinheritance of defendant, and in themselves, as he was advised unreasonable and contrary to the laws: he confessed that he sat in court, and that he had refused to accept of one year's lord's rent, or old rent of a copyhold estate for a fine upon admittance; but denied the returning of the juries, the causing of his own servants to be affeerors, the directing or appointing of unreasonable fines for non-appearances or bloodshed, the exacting heriots from poor men where none were due, the embezzling or destroying copies of estates, or the court rolls, or refusing any of the tenants access to such of them as were in his custody.

To this answer, the complainants replied in hilary term, and the defendant rejoined; and witnesses being examined on the part of the complainants, but none on the part of the defendant, by reason of the sickness of the defendant's counsel, it was ordered that the defendant should have time to examine his witnesses until Easter term, next following. This year the death of the marquis of Winchester put an end to the gainful stewardship of Mr. Wycherley. 1675. Hilary term this year, Mr. Wycherley exhibited his cross bill against some of the complainants (now defendants) and several others, insisting among other things, that the defendants might discover what lands they held, which

were copyhold, which were borough-hold, and which were freehold; and what rents, sevices, or duties were reserved and respectively due for the same; what heriots were to be paid on the death or alienation of any tenant; what fines or reliefs upon admittance; what fines they themselves did pay upon their admittance to their copyhold land, and what fines their ancestors and predecessors did pay for a hundred years last past, for the lands they were admitted unto; and whether the fines upon admittances were not arbitrary, uncertain, and at the will of the lord; whether the borough-hold lands were and ought to be held by copy of court roll, and passed by surrender and grant of the lord, and might discover and bring in all court rolls, court books and writings concerning the premises. the said defendant might make a true answer, and the plaintiff be relieved, was the scope of the bill.

To this cross bill the complainants (now defendants) put in their answers, and did thereby severally set forth some court rolls and other writings, and also divers rents and fines formerly paid by some of their respective ancestors and others under whom they claimed; and the rents now by them paid, and the fines by them formerly paid on their admissions to their respective copyhold estates within the said manor, which fines appeared by the said answers, to be above one year's old rent of the said

The studient Barons of Went.

copyholders by them respectively paid, but said that so much as was taken of the defendants or any of their ancestors over and above one year's chief rent, for a fine upon admittances upon death or alienation, the same was extorted by the officers and under stewards of the said manor.

April 28th, the court ordered that there should be no further examination of witnesses in either cause, but that the depositions taken in the former cause should be made use of on both sides in the cross cause, and that both causes should be heard on the 20th day of May next.

May 20th, upon hearing the bill and answers on on both sides, and reading several depositions of witnesses on behalf of the complainants, and reading of an ancient court roll, containing the customs of the manor of Wem, and of several ancient copies of court rolls produced on the part of the complainants William Allinson and others; the right honourable the barons of the exchequer referred the controverted customs to a trial at law upon several issues.

1675. Oct. 28th, upon hearing Mr. Sergeant Maynard, Mr. Sergeant Calthhorp, sir John King, Mr. Lechmere, and others of counsel with Mr. Wycherley, offering reasons why the said Mr. Wycherley

did not except of the issues directed, nor go to trial upon them, and desiring the cause might be heard. Mr. Wycherley being present in court, and declaring that he would submit to the judgment of the court therein, without praying a trial at law, it was ordered by the court that the said cause should be heard at Serjeant's Inn, on Friday the 3rd Dec. and the counsel on both sides were ordered to attend.

December 3rd, on hearing counsel on both sides. it was ordered by the court, that Mr. Wycherley should be quieted and settled in the manor of Wem. of assessing and taking fines upon admittances according to the decree of the court of wards then read in court, and to take and receive his fines and profits of the said manor until the plaintiffs should evict him by law, and the plaintiff's bill was to be retained twelve months for that pupose. It was also ordered that it should be tried at the bar of the court of exchequer, the then next Easter term, by a lury of the county of Worcester, where the boroughholders within the manor of Wem might alien their barrugh-holds without surrender, and whether a heriot be due unto the lord of the said manor from every copyholder within the said manor upon alienatow of his copyhold estate. And Mr. Wycherley the first day of the then next term was to give unto the deputy, remembrancer, a note of what other customs ha would controvert.

1676. In Easter term in this year the custom of alienating borough-hold lands without surrender, and the other customs of alienating part of a copyhold estate without heriot, were tried at the bar of the court, and a verdict passed in favour of the complainants.

May 28th, it was ordered that the controverted customs which had not then be heard should stand in the paper of causes for thursday the 1st day of June.

June 1st, upon hearing the counsel of plaintiffs and defendants, and reading the depositions taken in the said cause, and of presentment roll of customs, taken at a court of survey, for the manor of Wem in 1564, and upon reading the several customs and debates upon the matter by the counsel on each part, it was ordered by the court that seven of the customs laid in the plaintiffs' bill should be decreed in favour of them (viz.) alienating by letter of attorney; setting for three years without licence; the payment of rents at michaelmas and lady-day, keeping the court rolls within the manor, surrenders by rod, descent of copyhold lands, time of keeping court-leets: that three customs should be referred to a trial at law (viz.) tenancy by courtesy, the widow freebench and amerciaments for non-appearance at court-leets; that Mr. Wycherley should

advise with his counsel whether he would try the customs of disposing at pleasure, timber-trees, and that other touching the choice of affeerors, and that he should pay the costs of the last trial of the two issues within a fortnight after the same was taxed.

June 23rd, Mr. Wycherley being present in court, refused to go to trial upon the issues at law directed by order of 1st June, but submitted the same to the court.

November 23rd, upon hearing counsel on both sides, and long debate of the matter, the right honourable William Montague, lord chief baron. and the rest of the barons of the court of exchequer, decreed that seven of the customs claimed should perpetually hereafter be used and enjoyed by the tenants of the manor of Wem, (viz.) alienating by letter of attorney, &c. (being the same mentioned in At the same time they decreed that last page.) six other customs claimed, should be perpetually used and enjoyed by the tenants of the said manor, unless Mr. Wycherley, his heirs, or assigns, or any claiming under him, them, or any of them shall within seven years next ensuing, make it appear to the court that there are not any such customs within the said manor, as alienation of borough-hold without surrender, heriots payable only on surrender of the whole copyhold estate, tenancy by courtesy,

widow's freebench, falling and selling timber-trees, essoigns and amerciaments, for not appearing at court-leets.

The counsel for Mr. Wycherley were Sergeant Maynard, Sergeant Calthorp, sir John King, Mr. Lechmere, Mr. Williams, and Mr. Littleton. For the plaintiffs, sir William Jones, attorney-general; sir Francis Winnington, solicitor-general; Mr. Sawyer, Mr. Burton, Mr. Etriche, &c.

1677. In michaelmas term this year, came on the trial about fines upon admittances. As the matter was of great importance, the plaintiffs retained eight counsel, at the expense of 228. Upon a full hearing of the cause, a verdict passed for them in these words, "That fines payable to the lord of the manor of Wem, for customary or copyhold lands there, upon the death of the tenants or alienation of copyhold lands ought to be certain, (that is to say) one year's ancient copyhold rent or lord's rent payable out of such copyhold lands to the lord of the said manor."

1678. In hilary term the plaintiffs by their counsel moved a decree upon this verdict. But Mr. Wycherley insisted on a new trial, and October 23rd got an order of court for the plaintiffs to shew cause why a new trial should not be had at the bar of the

court by a jury of the county of Lincoln, whether fines upon admittances were certain or uncertain.

1679. This point being still litigated, Mr. Wycherley's last resource was to corruption. He found means to bribe Mr. Felton the plaintiffs' agent, to betray them. As soon as his treachery was discovered, they employed Mr. George Tyler, of Darleston, to act for them.

1680. Upon hearing counsel on both sides, it was ordered by the court, that unless the defendant should pay unto the plaintiffs by the 17th of that instant May, the sum of £97. costs already taxed for the trial at the bar upon fines certain, the court would decree the cause upon the former verdict. But in case the said costs should be paid them, it was ordered that there should be a new trial at the bar of the court in michaelmas term next, by a special jury of the county of Hertford. 1680. May 17th, upon hearing sir Robert Sawyer and others of coursel with the plaintiffs, and upon hearing of Mr. Lechmere and others of counsel with the defendant, desiring that the order to pay the £95. costs may be set aside in respect as they alleged, the defendant had already paid or satisfied the same unto William Felton, one of the plaintiffs; and upon reading the affidavit of the said William Felton, touching the costs and releases of twelve of the said

tenants towards the same, and upon reading of the affidavit of Richard Mather, on the behalf of the plaintiffs, and debate of the matter; it was ordered by the court that for the future, no debate be had touching any former payment of the said costs, but that the defendant should by that day sev'night, peremptorily pay the said £95. costs into the hands of the plaintiffs's clerk, in court, for their use; otherwise the court declared they would decree the custom for the plaintiffs for fines certain upon the former verdict, without any new trial.

May 25th, the court decreed, that fines payable to the lord of the manor of Wem, for customary or copyhold lands there, upon death of the tenants, or alienation of their said copyhold lands, ought to be certain, that is to say, one year's ancient copyhold rent, or lord's rent payable out of such copyhold lands to the lord of the said manor, according to the verdict passed for the plaintiffs; unless cause was shewed to the contrary the first monday of that Easter term, the defendant paying £5, costs for that day's attendance.

June 21st, it was ordered that if the defendant paid the £95 costs to Mr. Frankland, the plaintiffs' attorney, for their use by saturday sev'night next, a new trial should be had at the bar of the court the next michaelmas term, by a special jury of the

county of Hertford. And if the defendant should make default in payment of the said costs by the time before limited, then the former decree was to be made absolute without any further motion.

Upon this, Mr. Wycherley moved the chancery to stop the proceedings of the exchequer, and something relating to this matter was brought before the house of lords.

1681. February 11th, the court being informed, that William Felton, gentleman, formerly a plaintiff in this cause had several copies and other writings delivered to him by the other plaintiffs or some of them, to make use of in this cause against the defendant, which (having agreed with the defendant) he refused to deliver back to the persons from whom he had the same, and upon reading the affidavit of George Tyler to the like effect; it was ordered by the court, that the said William Felton upon the service of the said order, should within a week within the next term, deliver unto the plaintiffs' attorney upon oath all such papers, writings, copies of court rolls, rolls and surveys whatsoever, which he or any of them hath in his or their hands, which he could come by without suit of law, which had been delivered to him, or intrusted with him concerning this suit or any trial had thereupon by the plaintiffs, or any of them, or any person or persons whatsoever on their behalf.

In Easter term the court being informed, that endeavours had been used to serve the said William Felton with the same order, but that he had absconded, and could not be personally served, and upon reading the affidavit of George Tyler to that effect: it was ordered by the court that the said order be continued upon the said William Felton, and that he deliver the said writings within a week of next term either upon oath to the plaintiff George Tyler, in the county, or to the Plaintiffs' attorney in court, and that leaving a copy of this order with some of his family at his dwelling house shall be a sufficient service thereof,

L95. costs, was indulged with a new trial about fines upon admittances, and being then in court, Mr. George Tyler preferred a bill against him to the barons of the exchequer, wherein he asserted, that the fine due and payable to the lord of the manor of Wem, for the fine being at the admission of any person to any customary lands held by copy of court roll, of the said manor, was, and time out of mind, had been, one year's ancient copyhold rent of such customary land, yearly due and payable to the lord of the said manor, for the time being and no more. On the contrary Mr. Wycherley in his answer maintained that the fine due and payable to the lord of the said manor upon admission of any person to any

customary lands held by copy of court roll of the manor aforesaid was, and time out of mind had been a reasonable fine at the will of the lord of the said manor for the time being. The trial was to have been in michaelmas term by a special jury of the county of Hertford, but the jury not appearing at the appointed time, it was put off till 27th January next.

their attorney Richard Ogden, and the defendant, by his attorney Charles Haynes, and the jury being sworn to speak the truth concerning the premises, they did say upon their oath, that the fine due and payable to the lord of the manor of Wem, for the time being upon the admission of any person to any customary lands held by copy of court roll of the said manor was, and time out of mind had been, a reasonable fine at the will of the lord of the said manor for the time being in manner and form as the said Daniel Wycherley had in his plea alleged. February 18th, Mr. Wycherley procured an exemplification of this verdict.

In all probability, the plaintiffs would have succeeded in this second, trial upon fines, had they had any other man but Mr. Wycherley to contend with, or had, they themselves been in as good circumstances as when they preferred their bill against

him. But before this last trial thirteen of them had been bought off by Mr. Wycherley, some had been ruined or nearly undone by the great fire, others by the bankruptcy of Mr. Smith; and what was worst of all, they could not recover their most material writings and evidences: so that it is no wonder they lost at last what they gained before.

This suit cost the plaintiffs £3000. and was so expensive to Mr. Wycherley, that it entailed a great debt on his estate, and obliged him to sell his manors of Wem and Loppington.

1684. They were purchased December 23rd, 36th Charles II. by the lord chief justice Jeffreys for £9000.

Mr. Wycherley made a handsome appearance, being of a large stature and comely countenance, his hair white with age. He had a clear understanding, and good courage. His behaviour was genteel and plausible. He would speak courteously to the man he designed to ruin. He was so much embroiled in law suits, that his son is said to have expressed his litigious temper, in the character of the widow Blackacre, in that admirable comedy, called "The plain Dealer." His long attendance in Westminster Hall, made him very capable of acting as a justice; for he was in the commission of the peace. He gave a

liberal education to two of his sons, and yet had no great affection or tenderness for his children. For Elizabeth, his only daughter, a beautiful woman became distracted, because he would not suffer her to marry one Mr, Pyke. His second son John died in gaol, where he had cast him for a debt to himself. He let his eldest son William lie in prison seven years, and his youngest son live in a mean condition in Wem. Notwithstanding these vexations in his family, and contest with his tenants, he arrived at a great age, and died at Clive in 1697, above eighty years old.

9th, JEFFREYS.

George Jeffries, or Jeffreys, one of the worst, yet greatest of men, was born at Acton, near Wrexham, in Denbighshire. His father had been a silk weaver, and in that business had acquired an estate of £500. per annum. His eldest brother had an university education, though designed only for a country gentleman. James, his youngest brother was vicar of Holt, and afterwards through his interest, prebendary of Canterbury. George himself being intended for the law, was sent to Oxford, and thence removed to the inns of court. As soon as he was qualified for the bar, William Williams, esq. and a certain London attorney were greatly instrumental in introducing him into business.

This attorney being long afterwards told that he would use him severely, with surprize, urged, that he had made him; which being reported to Jeffreys, he said, "Then I will take my maker by the heels." His first preferment was to be the common sergeant of London, in which post, he distinguished himself so much, that the king conferred on him the order of knighthood.

1678. The 30th Charles II. he was grown so eminent in his profession, that the city of London chose him for their recorder. Whilst he was in this office. the popish plot broke out, and he gave full credit to Oates and Bedloe, though ne lived to see his Then too, he warmly declaimed against popery, but when it had got the ascendant at court, he was willing to grant it any indulgence. the attorney-general, managed the evidence against the pretended murderers of sir Edmondbury Godfrey; and having assisted at the trial of six supposed conspirators against the king, he pronounced the sentence against them. After this his zeal against popery cooled; and he attached himself firmly to the court; which being alarmed at the petitons that were agitated in all parts of the kingdom for the sitting of parliament, he moved his majesty by proclamation to prohibit the framing and presenting such petitions, and was very active in discouraging For these services, he was made a sergeant

at law, and chief justice of Chester. But when the parliament met, he fell under the censure of the commons, who voted him a betrayer of the rights of the subject, and addressed the king to remove him from his chief justiceship of Chester, and all other public offices and employments under his ma-The misdemeanor they charged him with was, that he had sometime declared that petitioning was tumultuous, seditious, and illegal, and at other times insinuated that his majesty would deprive the citizens of London of their charters and immunities The king's answer in case they should petition. was, that he would consider of it. The commons had a mind to have Mr. George Treby, recorder, and to induce sir George Jeffreys to resign that office, threatened him with an impeachment. Sir George terrified with that formidable sound, compromised matters with the house, and submitted at their bar to receive a reprimand on his knees. difficulty was to come well off with the king, and to secure his interest at court. He applied therefore to the king for leave to surrender his place of recorder, which his majesty was unwilling to grant, as holding his boistrous domineering deportment as an excellent qualification for his service in over awing the insolence of the citizens, and of little use any where else. But he never ceased soliciting his suit till he obtained it; which gave occasion to his majesty to say, that sir George was not parliament

proof; and for this reason, he had no real value for him for sometime afterwards. When the Oxford parliament had been dissolved, sir George appeared with a sword on as one of the lieutenancy of London, to present an address to the king. About this time he was made the king's sergeant, and as such expressed great zeal and devotion for the court. encourage and reward him, on 7th of November he was created a baronet. He had bought a seat and estate at Bulstrode, Buckinghamshire, and so in his patent is stiled of that place. He carried on the court prosecutions with so much rage and violence, that he was thought a fit person to execute all the dirty work that still remained to be done; accordingly September 29th, he was made lord chief justice of the king's bench, having resigned his post of chief justice of Chester. In his new station he presided at the state trials, which he managed in so arbitrary and indecenta manner, that he shewed a conscience which disdained scruples, a heart incapable of remorse, and a disposition equally prone to submit to any baseness, or commit any outrage. He was now admitted into the privy council; and the next year into the cabinet. 1684. As he was setting out on the northern circuit, the king gave him a ring from his finger; and telling him that it was a hot summer, advised him not to drink too much. In this expedition having wheedled or terrified the people to a compliance, at his return he waited on his majesty at

Windsor, and delivered up to him the charters of the city of Lincoln, and several other corporations as a proof of his own loyalty, and a triumph over the peoples' liberty. Afterwards he moved the king in council for a general pardon of all rescuants, that is, a dispensation of the laws made against them; which motion was defeated by the wisdom of the lord keeper North. At last the king grew weary of sir George, and would probably have removed him had he lived six months longer. Whilst his majesty was thinking about a change of measures, sir George was treating about the purchase of the barony of Wem, and the manors of Wem and Loppington, which on 23rd Dec. were sold unto him; Edward Kynaston, of Oatley, esq. and William Adams, of Loppington, gentleman, having been nominated to compute the rents, and ascertain the true value thereof.

1685. May 13th, 1st James II. a little before the meeting of the parliament sir George Jeffreys was created baron Jeffreys, of Wem, being the first baron of that place by creation. In August he began his bloody campaign, guarded by troops of soldiers, and marking his progress by the carnage he left behind him. Of those unhappy persons who had been concerned in Monmouth's rebellion, he caused two hundred and fifty-one to be executed. He forced others to purchase their pardons at the

expence of half, all, and sometimes more than they were worth. He practised these extortions on the innocent as well as the guilty. Mr. Prideaux was obliged to buy his liberty at the price of £14,760. The lord keeper North dying on 5th Sept. George, lord Jeffreys was made lord high chancellor of England, on the 28th of the same month: and soon after lord high steward for the trial of lord Dalamere.

1686. The next year he was the mouth of that ecclesiastical, but illegal court, which suspended the bishop of London. Formerly with great vehemence he had ranted against popery, but now he acted in a commission manifestly designed to favour, and by degrees to introduce it. 1687. As president of this inquisition, he deprived the vice chancellor of Cambridge of that office, and of his headship of a college; because that university would not obey a royal mandamus in favour of a papist.

1688. When these and the like proceedings had disposed the nation for a revolution October 16th, lord Jeffreys in person restored the charter of London, but in his way to guild-hall, met with such treatment from the populace as at once testified how much the government was fallen into contempt, and how odious he had rendered himself by his tyrannical behaviour. When the prince of Orange's design began first to be talked of, this lord

being asked whether he could guess what the heads of his manifesto would be, he jecosely answered, mine will be one. November 1st, when the danger grew nearer, he got a pardon from the king for what he had done. December 11th he disappeared, and not trusting to his pardon, resolved to make his escape. In order thereto, he shaved his eye brows. put on a seaman's habit, and all alone, Dec. 12th made the best of his way to Wapping, with a design to take shipping for Hamburgh. But while he was looking out at a window, say some, or while he was drinking his pot of ale in a public house, say others, a scrivener whom he had once upon a trial frightened almost into convulsions, got a glimpse of him, and recollecting in a moment, all the terrors which had then taken such hold of him, gave the word to the mob, who rushed in upon him like a herd of wolves, and shewed a disposition to tear him to pieces. Every face that he saw was the face of a fury. Every grasp he felt he had reason to believe was that of the demon waiting for him. Every voice that he could distinguish in so wild an uproar, overwhelmed him with reproaches, and his conscience echoed within him, that he deserved them all. In this miserable plight, in these merciless hands, with these distracted thoughts, and with horror and despair in his ghastly face, he was goaded on to the lord mayor; who seeing so great a man whom he had never looked up to without trembling, brought before him as

the worst and most abhorred of all malefactors, fell into fits, and was carried off to his bed; from whence he never rose more.

This obliged the lords of Whitehall who had taken the government upon them, and had soon notice of what had happened to interpose, and by their warrant to commit him to the Tower, which was at this time rather a deliverance than a punishment. For now the rage of the people was grown more ungovernable than ever, and such horrible menaces did they roar out against him, that it was thought expedient to surround him with no less than two regiments of train bands; nor did he yet believe himself safe; he saw the same threatening faces on all sides of him; he saw them hold up whips and halters; he saw them pressing in upon him almost to the peril of their own lives, and holding up his hands sometimes on one side of the coach, and sometimes on the other, he cried out in agonies, "For the Lord's sake keep them off. For the Lord's sake keep them off." At last he had the consolation to be safely lodged in the Tower, and had time and leisure to bestow many a painful reflection on the enormities which had brought him thither.

Before the government was at leisure to punish him, he died in the Tower on the 18th April, 1689, having, as it is said, hastened his end by intemperate

use of spirituous liquors. Whilst he continued a prisoner he was visited by Dr. Scott, who urged him to improve his present situation by a serious review of his past life. He expressed great concern upon the occasion, but declared that how cruel soever his proceedings in the west, after Monmouth's rebellion, might be thought, they had by no means come up to the severity which king James had expected from him, his majesty being extremely displeased with him on that account. His death was not soon known in the country. 1689. For May 2nd, 1st William and Mary, the court at Wem was held in his name, Christopher Brayne, of Whixall, and Joseph Chetwood, of Whitchurch being his stewards. purchased the reversion of Wolverley Hall of Rich. Corbet, of Moreton, esq. for £1000. Aston Hall of Mr. Robert Wilkinson; Whixall Hall of counsellor Brayne, and a tenement that had belonged to Wm. Felton, of the Lowe, gentleman.

Lord Jeffreys had extraordinary natural abilities, but was not learned in his profession, having little acquired knowledge beyond what practice in affairs had supplied. He took a pleasure in mortifying fraudulent attornies, and would dispense his severities with a sort of majesty. When he was in temper, and matters indifferent came before him, he very well became his seat of justice, but when he was ruffled, or concerned in state prosecutions, he was

rather a fury than a judge. He was very passionate; could not reprehend without scolding, and in such Billingsgate language as should not come out of the mouth of any man. He did not regard decency, nor so much as affect to seem impartial. quence was copious, but neither correct nor agreea-His conversation lay much among the good fellows and humourists, and his delights were all the extravagancies of the bottle. He had little regard to gratitude, or friendship, justice, or honour; so that while he kept on horseback he did not care whom he rode over. Only those above, or that could hurt or benefit him, and none else might depend on fair quarter at his hands. Burnet says that he was scandalously vitious, which is perhaps to be understood of his being drunk every day, of his injustice, avarice, and cruelty.

John, lord Jeffreys, only son of the chancellor, was about fifteen years old at his father's death. The house of commons admitted a bill for charging his estate in Leicestershire with £14,760. with interest, which his father had extorted from Edmund Prideaux, esq. but it was suffered to drop. November 12th, the court at Wem was held in the name of sir Henry Pollexfen, chief justice of the common pleas, the honourable sir Robert Clayton, knight and baronet, Edward Jennings, esq. and Thomas Collson, gent trustees of the late, and guardians of the present

lord Jeffreys. About the same time the commons brought in a bill to forfeit the estate of the late lord Jeffreys, which was admitted nemine contradicente. But afterwards this bill met with so much opposition, that no progress was made in it. 1690. The next year an act of grace, or indemnity passed out of which, amongst others George, lord Jeffreys, deceased, was excepted. But this exception signified nothing. For neither was his blood attainted, nor his estate forfeited, nor any fine charged upon it.

In 1691 sir Henry Pollexfen died, and Sept. 12th the court was held in the name of the honourable sir Robert Clayton, knight and baronet; Edward Jennings, esq. and Thomas Collson, gentleman.

at full age, and April 17th the court was first called in his name, Christopher Brayne, of Whixall, and Joseph Chetwood, of Whitchurch being his stewards. He married Charlotte Herbert, sole daughter and heir of Philip Herbert, earl of Pembroke and Montgomery. Chancellor Jeffreys never visited the place from whence he took his title; but this young lord having sent a vessel of wine before him to Mr. Barnes, of the Lowe, honoured Wem with his presence, and revelled at the Lowe with the country gentlemen, and his principal tenants. He was a little man, rakish, and in some of his freaks uncommonly

extravagant. Like a debauchee of quality he affected wit, and versified by way of frolic. lection of state poems in 4 vols. 4to. two little pieces are ascribed to this young peer, one is called a fable; * the other, a burlesque translation of an elegy on the duke of Glocester; † What the public has been told of his behaviour at the funeral of John Dryden, esq. shews both absurdity and meanness of spirit. This famous poet dying on wednesday morning 1st May, 1701, Dr. Thomas Sprat, then bishop of Rochester, and dean of Westminster sent a person the next day to acquaint the lady Elizabeth Howard, Mr. Dryden's widow, that he would make her a present of the ground, which was £40. with all the other abbey fees. The lord Hallifax likewise sent this offer to lady Elizabeth, and Mr. Charles Dryden, her son, that if they would give him leave to bury Mr. Dryden, he would inter him with a gentleman's private funeral, and afterwards bestow £500, on a monument in the abbey; which as they had no reason to refuse, they accepted. On the saturday following the company came, the corpse was put into the velvet hearse, and eighteen mourning coaches filled with company attended. When they were just ready to move, the lord John Jeffreys with some of his rakish companions coming by, asked, whose funeral it was? and being told Dryden's, he said, What! shall Dryden the greatest honour and ornament of

the nation be buried after this private manner? No gentleman, let all that loved Mr. Dryden, and honour his memory, alight, and join with me in gaining my lady's consent to let me have the honour of his interment, which shall be after another manner than this, and I will bestow £1000, on a monument in the abbey for him. The gentlemen in the coaches not knowing of the bishop of Rochester's favour, nor of the lord Hallifax's generous design, (they both having out of respect to the family, enjoined the lady Elizabeth and her son to keep their favour concealed to the world, and let it pass for their own expense) readily came out of the coaches. and attended lord Jeffreys up to the lady's bed side, who was then sick: he repeated the purport of what he had before said, but she absolutely refusing, he fell upon his knees vowing never to rise till his request was granted. The rest of his company, by his desire, kneeled also; and the lady being under a sudden surprize, fainted away. As soon as she recovered her speech, she cried, No, no; enough gentlemen, replied he, my lady is very good, she says, Go, go; she repeated her former words with all her strength, but in vain; for her feeble voice was lost in their acclamations of joy: and the lord Jeffreys ordered the hearseman to carry the corpse to Mr. Russel, an undertaker in Cheapside, and leave it there till he should send orders for the embalming, which, he added, should be after the royal manner. His

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The ancient Barons of Wem.

directions were obeyed, the company dispersed, and lady Elizabeth and her son were inconsolable. The next day Mr. Charles Dryden waited on the lord Hallifax, and the bishop to excuse his mother and himself by relating the real truth. But neither his lordship nor the bishop would admit of any plea; especially the latter, who had the abbey lighted, the ground opened, the choir attending; an anthem ready set. and himself waiting for some hours without any corpse to bury. The undertaker after three days' expectation of orders for embalming without receiving any, waited on the lord Jeffreys, who pretending ignorance of the matter, turned it off with an ill-natured jest, saying that those who observed the orders of a drunken frolic, deserved no better; that he remembered nothing at all of it; and that he might do what he pleased with the corpse. Upon this the undertaker waited upon the lady Elizibeth and her son, and threatened to bring the corpse home, and set it before the door. They desired a day's respite, which was granted. Mr. Charles Dryden wrote a handsome letter to the lord Jeffreys, who returned it with this cool answer, that he knew nothing of the matter, and would be troubled no more about it. He then addressed the lord Hallifax. and the bishop of Rochester, who absolutely refused to do anything in it. In this distress, Dr. Garth sent for the corpse to the College of Physicians, and proposed a subscription, to which himself set a most

When the interment was over, noble example. Mr. Charles Dryden sent a challenge to the lord Jeffreys, who refusing to answer it; he sent several others, and went often himself, but could neither get a letter delivered, nor admittance to speak to him; which incensed him, that he resolved since his lordship refused to answer him like a gentleman, that he would watch an opportunity to meet, and fight off hand, though with all the rules of honour, which his lordship hearing, left the town, and Mr. Charles Dryden could never have the satisfaction of meeting him, though he sought it to his death with the utmost application. I believe lord Jeffreys heartily repented this adventure, but do not know whether it served to reform him. It is certain that he did not long survive it. 1702. For he died the next year, on 9th May, 1702, being the last baron of Wem by creation.

On 28th of the same month, the court at Wem by mistake was called in the name of Iady Charlotte, relict of the last lord Jeffreys, and afterwards wife of Thomas, viscount Windsor of the kingdom of Irèland, in 1711 created lord Mountjoy, of the isle of Wight. But on the death of John, lord Jeffreys, the barony and manor of Wem descended on Henrietta Levisa, his sole daughter and heir then an infant, afterwards countess of Pomfret; and the great court November 19th, was held in the name

of sir John Trevor, master of the rolls, trustee of the last baron of Wem, and guardian of his daugh-1708. In the 7th Ann, an act of parliament was obtained for vesting the barony of Wem, and manors of Wem and Loppington, and several lands and tenements in the county of Salop, and the manors of Dolby and Broughton, and lands thereto belonging, in the county of Leicester, and the manor of Fulmer, and several lands and tenements in the county of Bucks, late the estate of George, lord Jeffreys, deceased, in trustees to be sold for payment of debts and portions, and other purposes therein Pursuant to which act, the barony of mentioned. Wem, and the manors of Wem and Loppington, and the lands and tenements thereto, were in 9th Ann sold to Henry, lord Newport, and afterwards earl of Bradford, for the sum of £12000.

10th, THE NEWPORTS.

The first of this family that had any interest or property in the parish of Wem, was sir Richard Newport, who married Rachael, daughter of John Levison, of Haling, in the county of Kent, and sister to sir Richard Levison, of Trenthem, in the county of Stafford, knight of the Bath. The place of his residence was Eyton upon Seven, in the parish of Wroxeter, where his father sir Francis Newport

had lived before him. 8th Charles I. sir Richard was high steward of the manor of Wem, for Thomas, earl of Arundel, a person of that high rank and quality, that no knight would think it beneath him to serve under him. In this office he seems so have continued for nine years, and till the earl of Arundel conveyed the barony and manor of Wem to Playters, Onslow, and others. About this time sir Richard purchased the manor of Lacon, in the parish of Wem, of Joseph Bannister, esq. a daughter of which family his great uncle had formerly married. 1642. October 14th, 18th Charles I. he was advanced to the dignity of a baron of England, with the title of lord Newport, of High Ercal, his patent being dated at Bridgenorth. This title cost him £6000, a sum at that time very acceptable to the king, who was much distressed, on account of his want of The civil war raging in all parts of the nation, lord Newport fortified his house at Ercal, having resigned his seat at Eyton to his son Francis. 1646. Ercal house was taken by the garrison of Wem. which was enriched by its plunder, and of several castles. When the royal party was reduced, their estates sequestered, and nothing left them to live upon till they did compound sir Richard, (for the rebels would not allow him the title of lord) was obliged to pay for his delinquency, the sum of £3287.6s.8d. besides an annual charge of £170. To secure his person from the violence, he had reason to apprehend

from the usurpers, he fled to France, where the next year on 8th February, 1651, he died at Moulins, in an advanced age.

Francis Newport, his son and heir, gave early hopes of the great man he afterwards proved. In his father's life time he signalized his courage and loyalty, both in Shropshire and North Wales, till by the fortune of war in 1644, on the 1st July he was taken prisoner near Oswestry by the parliament forces. He paid dearly for his liberty and estate. For under the title of Francis Newport, of Eyton, upon Severn, esq. he was forced to compound by the payment of £5284. 1649. He was one of the suspected lords whom Oliver Cromwell committed to 1655. At the restoration of Charles II. he succeeded his father in honour and estate, and being a person of great merit was first made comptroller, next treasurer of the king's household; and 1675, 27th Charles II. viscount Newport, of Bradford, an hundred, in the county of Salop, the fee whereof, and of some other hundreds he purchased of the crown three years before. He was lord lieutenant of the county of Salop, and treasurer, not only to Charles II. but also to James II. William III. and queen Ann. 1694. In 6th William and Mary he was created earl of Bradford, and in 6th Ann died at Twettenham, in the 89th year of his age, and was buried at Wroxeter with great funeral pomp.

By his wife Diana, daughter to Francis, earl of Bedford, he had five sons and four daughters. He erected an almshouse at Ercal, added £20. per annum to the endowment of the vicarage of Ercal, and as much to that at Wroxeter, and left his grandson Henry the money, wherewith he bought the lordship of Wem, and several others.

Richard Newport his eldest son succeeded as earl of Bradford, and lord lieutenant of Shropshire. He was of the privy council in the reigns of Ann, and George I. but never accepted any preferment at court, being better pleased with his retirement in the country, at his seat of Eyton upon Severn. His stature was large, his deportment grave, and his life exemplary. June 14th, 9th George 1. he died, and was buried at Wroxeter. By his wife Mary, daughter and heir of sir Thomas Weston, in the county of Stafford, baronet, he had issue four sons, and as many daughters.

Henry, lord Newport was the first baron of Wem of this family. In 9th Ann he purchased the barony of Wem, and the manors of Wem and Loppington, and soon after came to Wem, attended by several gentlemen from Shrewsbury. On his entrance into the Mill-street, he was complimented in a set speech by Mr. Richard Jebb, who on this occasion performed the office of public orator. The country gentle-

men, the clergy, the bailiffs, and burgesses of the town in their gowns, were ready to receive him, and marching two by two before him, formed a handsome procession. 1713. He represented the county of Salop in the last parliament of queen Ann. And again in the 1st parliament of George I. 1714, he stood candidate a third time with sir Robert Corbet, of Adderley, baronet, and was at Wem soliciting votes, but John Kynaston and Robert Lloyd, esgrs. had a majority at this election 1722. This disappointment was the less, as the next year he had a seat in the house of lords 1723. He slighted Eyton, resided chiefly at Shrewsbury or Shiffnall, when he was in the country. 1728. In 2nd George II. he gave £50. towards finishing the market house at Wem, in which parish, at the Ditches he had purchased an estate formerly belonging to the Shentons. He was constituted lord lieutenant of the county of Stafford 27th September, 1715, and on the accession of George II. he was appointed lord lieutenant, and custos rotulorum of the county of Salop, as also custos rotulorum of the county of Montgomery, but still he lived independant of the court. 1734. December 27th, 7th George II. he died of the gout in his stomach, and was buried in the abbey church at Westminster. His body was handsome and well made, of moderate stature, inclinable to be fat. He had good natural parts, was affable, generous, kind, and obliging. Amongst a great many good qualities

he had one imperfection, that he chose to keep captain Smith's wife rather than marry a wife of his own. By his last will bearing date 8th May, 1730, he devised all his real estate, subject to such debts and legacies as his personal estate should not be sufficient to pay to certain persons in trust for Mrs. Ann Smith, and a natural son by her, called John Harrison. Pursuant to his direction, an act of parliament was procured, to enable the said John Harrison to take and use the sirname of Newport. This young, gentleman was to have kept up the name and family, and to have inherited the great estate of his father; but falling into the company of rakes, by his wild excesses and repeated salivations, he had lost the use of his reason, and his mother has conveyed the estate after his decease, to the honourable William Pulteney, earl of Bath. Henry, lord Newport chose for his high steward, Mr. Jobber, of Shiffnall, who was present at one great court. Of late years there has been no high steward. Mr. Lacon, of Shrewsbury, clerk of the peace, was steward for several years; and on his death, was succeeded by Henry Jenks, of Salop, esq. in whom we see united, the gentleman, the lawyer, and the scholar.

1734. The hon. Thomas Newport on the death of his brother Henry, succeeded to the earldom of Bradford, and the barony of Wem. But to the irreparable loss of this noble family, and to the great

regret of all who wish well to it, this earl too is deprived of the use of his reason; which misfortune was occasion by an amour he had with a maid of low condition, and his being forced to abandon one that he loved to distraction. His father sent him to travel, thinking that in foreign countries, amidst a great variety of beauties, he would forget a mistress so unworthy of him; but this disorder was too great to admit of a remedy. Being incapable of managing his estate, by an order of chancery, the care of it is committed to sir Orlando Bridgeman, bart, and the earl of Montrath, who have married two of his sisters. He now lives at Weston under Lizoord, a fine seat, which came by the countess, his mother, and at which she finished her days. Mr. Pemberton obtained the stewardship for about two years, but then Mr. Jenks was restored to the general satisfaction of the borough, and the manor. 1750. Feb. 8th, the commons passed an ingressed bill from the lords, to impower the committees of Thomas, earl of Bradford, a lunatic, to purchase lands and estates of inheritance, with part of his personal estate.

THE CUSTOMS OF THE MANOR OF WEM.

HERE was a charter of customs and liberties granted to the tenants of this manor, by Ralph,

lord Greystock, in the year of our Lord 1459, which would have been of great service to them, particularly in relation to the fines of copyholders, if some villain in order to add to, and augment the grants of the said lord, had not been guilty of the grossest forgery, which was thus detected.

Robert Whitley, Thomas Salter, and Thomas Ansell, among other commissioners appointed by the right honourable William, lord Dacre, for the survey of the lordship of Wem, &c. sitting in the court house at Wem on July 15th, 1561, there came before them Thomas Pontsbury, gentleman, with all the tenants of the lordship of Wem, who jointly exhibited to the said surveyors, a deed or charter under the seal of Ralph, lord Greystock, dated February 2nd, 1459, 37th Henry VI. containing certain customs and liberties granted to the tenants of It appeared, and was confessed by the said tenants, that the seal and parchment were the same as lord Grevstock had delivered to them near one hundred years ago; but that the writing in the deed had been rased, the parchment pounced, and new written, and such customs and grants inserted as the writer pleased. The said tenants could not tell who was the new writer thereof; but they declared that the deed was taken out of the church coffer, and re-delivered to them by Mr. Watkis. The premises being considered by Mr. Pontsbury and the tenants, they unanimously acknowledged the deed was of

little force, and would in no wise stand to it, but did wholly submit themselves to the clemency of the lord, desiring the surveyors to intercede for them. This occasioned the commission and inquest issued out, and made three years after the survey.

The oldest custom roll that is now extant, bears date in 1564, 9th Elizabeth, when William, lord Dacre procured a commission out of the court of wards for G. Bromley, R. Kynaston, Thomas Powell, Robert Standford, &c. to hold a court of survey, and by presentment of a jury to find out the customs of his manor of Wem.

The persons that were returned and sworn upon the jury were the following customary holders, Richard Twyford, John Hockekis, Randal Hinton, John Higginson, John Cooper, Thomas Barnes, Allan Hinton, William Moody, John Pay, John Adams, John Moreton, Richard Newns, Thomas Ellis, Humphrey Jebb, John Cooper, jun. John Widows, John Allan, Hugh Sherratt, Thomas Higginson, William Hayward, senior, Thomas Pidgeon, William Davies, jun. William Thurlin.

The articles given them in charge to make inquisitions about, and presentment on, were

1st, What estate they have in their customary messuages and lands fee-simple, term of life or years.

2nd, What tenancy by the courtesy of England for the husband.

3rd, What tenancy in dower, or widow's estate for the wife.

4th, By what means they receive their estate by the rod, or otherwise.

5th, If the tenant will alien in what form he must do it.

6th, In what form and time the same alienation must be presented and ordered.

7th, If the tenant die, who shall be his next heir, the eldest, youngest, or more of his sons. If he be within age, who shall have the custody of him during his minority.

8th, If he die, having no heir males, but females; whether all shall inherit, or but one.

9th, Whether the fine be certain or arbitrable, at the will of the lord, or his officers' will.

10th, If the tenant do voluntary waste upon his tenement, or willingly doth waste or spoil timber, and sell that away, what is the custom herein.

11th, For the reparation of their tenements, whether they may take their timber without the assignment of the bailiff, or other officers.

12th, If any tenant do conceal any rental court roll, or any other evidence of the lords being in his possession, and he required by the officer or bailiff to deliver the same, what is then to be done.

13th, If any tenant will willingly detain any rent, suit or service due for his land, or will conceal any land, and keep it without taking it up, what hath been the custom for redress of the same.

14th, In what time the heir, widow, or purchaser shall come to claim, and have their estates, and in what form the same shall be done.

15th, Whether the tenants may sue one another in any other court, and what the pain thereof is.

16th, Whether they may demise, or let to farm, their copyhold more than for a year, or less without licence.

` 17th, What heriots the lord is to have of the several tenants, as well burgesses as others, and if the tenants dwell without the lordship, how the lord shall have his heriot.

18th, That they make particular mention in what place their general customs do extend, and where private and particular customs be incident.

19th, If the tenants shall wilfully purjure themselves in any matter between the lord and his tenant, or tenants, what order or pain hath been.

20th, What by-laws, or other customs for the better ordering of the tenants have heretofore been made, and how the have been observed.

21st, What order had been used for the herbage pannage in the lord's woods.

THE PRESENTMENT OF THE JURY.

1st, The jury being customary holders of the manor of Wem present, that certain of the customary holders of the said manor are seized in their demesne, as of fee-simple of their customary-hold lands according to the custom of the said manor, and certain of the customary-holders are seized of their customary-hold lands in their demesne, as of fee-tail, general, or special, and some hold for term of life, or lives, and some for term of years, according to the custom of the said manor, and the same customary-hold lands have been of right accustomed time, whereof the memory of man knoweth not the contrary to be set, and let by copy of court roll of the said manor, according to the custom of the said manor, and so demised and demiseable in feesimple, fee-tail, general and special for term of life and lives, and term of years, according to the custom of the said manor.

2nd, If any person take to his wife any woman inheritrix, customary-holder of any customary lands of this manor, and had or have issue by the same wife of her body, lawfully begotten, and the same wife decease, and the husband her survive, the custom of the said manor doth give the same husband all his said late wife's customary-hold lands for term of his natural life, to hold of the lord for rents and services according to the custom of the said manor.

3rd, At the death of every customary tenant which had in him either fee-simple, or fee-tail, general, in his customary-hold lands, the wife surviving must have and enjoy by customs, all such lands that her husband died seized of, according to the custom of the manor during her widow's estate, and no longer.

4th, If any customary tenant decease at the next great leet, or law day then next after holden, with the said manor all such homages that are elected and chosen to present and serve the court, present the death of the tenant, and who is his next kin, of what age, and in whose keeping, and the heriot due to the lord, and the lands that the tenant died seized of, and their known taketh his seizin in the court of all the said lands that the said tenant died seized of, taking out his copy for the said lands,

paying a fine to the lord according to the custom of the said manor by rod, or otherwise.

5th, If any customary tenant alien his customary lands, the custom of the said manor is, and time out of memory of man hath been, that the same tenant either by himself in proper person, or by his attorney or attornies, tenants of the said manor must surrender the said lands by rod, pen, or such like, the steward, or deputy steward thus serving the court, having the one end thereof in his hand, and surrender the other end, into the hands of the lords of the said manor, to the use and behoof of him unto whom the surrender is made, either in fee-simple fee-tail, general or special, term of life, or lives, or term of years, according to the custom of the said manor, and thereupon in the said court the said steward, or deputy steward, or recorder doth but the end of such rod, pen, or such like into the hands of the alience, or him unto whose use the surrender is made, granting possession and seizin of the said lands, to hold of the said lord for the rents and services thereof due, and of right accustomed, paying a fine according to the custom of the said manur.

6th, When a customary tenant is disposed to alien customary lands, he may make his letter of attorney to one or two customary tenants, to surrender his customary lands unto any one, expressing the use

in the letter of attorney, and the fine must be observed of the alienation according as is mention in the said letter of attorney, which letter of attorney cannot be made frustrate by the maker thereof, but stands good to his use named in the said letter of attorney, according to the custom of the said manor, so that the maker of the said letter of attorney be not under the age of twenty-one years, a wife under covert baron, a man or a woman mad or lunatic.

7th and 8th, If the tenant decease if he have heirs male, the eldest son is his heir; if he have no son but a daughter, the same is his heir; if more daughters, all be his heirs; and if the heir be within age, the next parent or friend unto whom the lands cannot descend, must have the governance and keeping of the said heir, or heirs until fourteen years of age be accomplished, and the governance of the same lands during the same years, to the only use of the said heir, or heirs.

9th, The ancient custom of the said manor is, that fines of the said customary lands were time out of mind, and now be arbitrable, so that the same fine be not over and above one year's rent due to the lord.

10th, The customary tenants that are seized in fee-simple, fee-tail, general, or special of customary

lands, may lawfully according to the custom of the said manor, cut down, give and sell all the timber, trees, oaks, and other woods growing, and being upon their customary-hold lands at their will and pleasure without contradiction, and fell and build thereupon at their pleasure, always excepting a tenant in dower, who cannot make waste upon the land she holdeth in dower, and the same tenant in dower is bound to repair all buildings thereupon, or else the heir thereof may take action accordingly, and also excepting tenants for term of life, or lives, and term of years, who are and be answerable to the lessors.

11th, The customary-holders may at their own pleasure, take such timber as they have standing upon their customary lands, to repair and build withal, or otherwise at their pleasures, without assignment of officer, or any other.

12th, If any customary tenant do withdraw willingly any rental or other evidence, or writing belonging to the lord, and refuse delivery thereof upon knowledge thereof, had the juries in leets, or law days ought to present the detaining thereof.

13th, If any tenant do willingly detain, or withhold any rent suit, or service due for his lands, or will conceal any land, or keep it without taking up, the lord may distrain for the same, or otherwise

seize the land, and keep it in his hands until the rents and services behind be satisfied and paid.

14th, This article is mentioned before, but yet albeit that the tenant in dower need not come to claim her estate, the inquest at the next court after the death of the husband doth present the widow after the decease of her husband, to the right of her dower if she demand it; according to the custom before mentioned.

16th, And the custom is, that the customary tenants cannot sue one another for customary lands, but in the court of custom; and also a pain is incurred, if one tenant sue another tenant out of the said court in action personal.

.16th, The custom is, that the tenants of the said manor may let, and set their customary lands without licence for three years.

17th, At the death of every customary holder, the lord must have his beast, and for default thereof, the best dead good moveable in the name of an heriot; and at a burgess' death, the lord is to have the best weapon of the said burgess, being upon his borough-hold lands; and if any customary tenant dwell out of the lordship and die, his tenant occupying his lands, shall pay an heriot to the lord in mannor and form, as the customary tenant ought to do.

18th, The customs particular, and general are mentioned in the articles before expressed, and hereafter ensuing.

19th, Such enquiry of perjury is not part of custom to be inquired of.

20th, Such things as are done by inquest, as touching and concerning pains, and ordering of the tenants are traversable by custom of the said manor.

21st, All the customary tenants ought to pay unto the lord when sufficient mast is within the lord's woods, 2d. for every one of their swine above the age of one year and a half, except one boar and sow, which are free, without payment of money. And when there is no mast, the tenants paid consuctude, called Worm Tach, being a half-penny for every swine of the same age, saving a boar and a sow free.

22nd, If any burgess do decease, his best weapon is due to the lord for an heriot. And the burgesses may alien their borough-hold land in fee-simple, or fee-tail, and the livery and seizin must be executed by the bailiffs of the borough for the time being, or as he may alien the same in fee-simple, or fee-tail, by parol, or word of mouth, and at the next court the livery of seizin must be then executed by the

said bailiffs, and at the court then next after holden, the bailiffs ought to present the estate made by parol, or word of mouth, and the alienee may have his copy of the same, if he will, for the better remembrance of the said sale and alienation, without any fine paid to the said lord, but paying for his copy. Also, the said burgesses may alien their boroughhold lands upon their death-beds by their last will and testament, purporting such an estate as shall then please the testator to devise, and the burgesses are to be toll-free and tach-free, paying 1d.

23rd. The yearly rents of the customary tenants are payable to the lord at two feasts, viz. at the annunciation of the Virgin Mary, and St. Michael the Archangel, by even portions.

24th, Two leets, or law-days ought, and are accustomed to be kept within the said lordship yearly, within one month next, after the feasts of Easter, and St. Michael the Archangel; and every customary tenant and borough-holder by custom, ought to appear at the said leets, or law-days, or else for default of appearance at one of the said courts, the maker of the said default is to be essoigned with 1d. if it be preferred, and at the next leet, or law-day if the tenant at the last court essoigned, make default of his appearance, then he is to be amerced in 6d.

25th, The custom is, and time out of memory of man hath been, that at every leet, or law-day, the township or hamlets of the said manor do present all the faults presentable within the said townships: And every township must agree, or the most part of them must agree in the said presentment, which presentment must be by the said court exhibited to the jury impannelled in the said court; and if the jury allow and confirm the said presentment, then the same is to stand in full force and virtue, or else to be void. And further, if the said jury do present anything of their own knowledge further than the presentments of the said townships, or hamlets, or by the oath of any other, the same is good, and then and thereupon before the said court is ended, two. offeerors must be chosen to affeer and tax the said amerciaments according to their discretion, without partiality, or offender amerced, without controlment of the lord, or any officers; all which amerciaments must be levied by the officer to the lord's use.

26th, The custom is, that the court rolls ought to be kept in safe and sure keeping, in a chest, coffer, or other place, under two locks and keys, within the said manor; and the bailiff, or officer to the lord is to have one key, and one customary tenant to have another key for that intent, that such tenant, or tenants having need of the sight of the said rolls.

Customs claimed in the Court of Exchequer, 1673.

may repair to the keepers thereof above mentioned, to have a view of the same rolls, paying for the search of the said rolls 2s. besides the copy.

27th, The tenants and burgesses of the said manor have had time out of memory of man, free-common of pasture (saving worm tach as aforesaid) in the lord's woods, lying within the said manor, (that is to say) Northwood, Cotton Wood, and Wem Brockhurst, three of the lord's woods lying and being within the said manor, except in spring time; and also free-common of pasture in a certain waste ground, called Wem Pool, until now of late, that certain parcels of the said woods and wastes have been inclosed.

As the life of copyhold depends on customs, it were to be wished that they were like the laws of the ancient Medes and Persians unalterable. But time insensibly makes a change in them as appears from the 9th, 15th, 21st, 26th, and 27th, in this presentment.

CUSTOMS CLAIMED IN THE COURT OF EXCHEQUER, 1673.

1st, The burgesses claimed a custom to alien their borough-hold lands without surrender, in these Customs claimed in the Court of Exchequer, 1673.

words "A burgess may alien his horough-hold lands. in fee-simple, or fee-tail, and the livery and seizin upon any feoffment made thereof, must be by the bailiffs of the borough of Wem for the time being, or the said burgess, or borough-holder may alien his borough-hold lands in fee-simple, or fee-tail, by parol, or word of mouth, and at the next court, livery and seizin must be executed thereof, by the bailiffs for the time being, and at the court next after holden, the said bailiffs ought to present estate made by parol, or word of mouth as aforesaid, and the alinee may have his copy of the same, if he will, for the better remembrance of the same sale, or alienation, without any other fine paying to the lord of the said manor, except for making the said copy Also any burgess within the said manor or borough, may alien his borough-hold upon his deathbed, by his last will and testament for such estate as shall please him.

2nd, The copyholders claimed a custom, that an heriot was due to the lord upon alienation of the whole copyhold estate, and not upon alienation of part thereof.

3rd, If any person take to his wife any woman inheritrix, customary-holder of any customary lands of the said manor, and had or have any issue by her, and the same wife deceased, the husband surviving,

Customs claimed in the Court of Exchequer, 1673

shall hold all the customary lands during his natural life.

4th, At the death of every customary tenant which was seized of any estate in fee-simple, or fee-tail, general in the said customary land, the wife of such tenant surviving her husband, shall have and enjoy all such customary lands that the husband died so seized of during her widowhood, and no longer.

5th, All customary tenants that are seized in feesimple, fee-tail, general, or special of any customary lands within the said manor, may lawfully cut down, give and sell all the timber, trees, and other trees growing, and being upon their customary lands at their will and pleasure without contradiction, or molestation of the lord of the said manor, or of any other, and may also build and make improvement upon the said lands at their pleasure.

6th, Every customary tenant and borough-holder ought to appear at the two leets or law days, and in default of appearance at one of the said courts, the maker of such default is to be essoigned with 1d. if it be preferred; and at the next leet or law day, if such tenant essoigned, make default in appearing then, to be amerced 6d. and no more.

7th, When a customary tenant of the said manor is disposed to alien, or give his customary lands, he

Customs claimed in the Court of Exchequer, 1673.

may make his letter of attorney to one or two customary tenants of the said manor, to surrender his copyhold lands to any person he shall name in the said letter of attorney, expressing therein the use and estate for which the said surrender is to be made, which letter of attorney cannot be revoked or made void by the maker thereof, but is to remain good and effectual to him to whose use itwas made according to the custom of the said manor, so that the making of the said letter of attorney at the time of making thereof, were not an infant feme covert, or non compos mentis.

8th, The tenants of customary lands within the said manor, may set and let their said lands for the term of three years, without the licence of the lord of the said manor.

9th, The yearly rents of the customary tenants of the said manor are payable to the lord at the two feasts in the year, (viz.) at the feast of the annunciation of the blessed Virgin, and St. Michael the Archangel, by equal portions.

10th, The court rolls of the said manor ought to be kept in safe and sure keeping, in a chest, coffer, or other place within the said manor, under two locks and keys, and the bailiff or officer of the lord to have one of the keys, and one of the customary Customs claimed in the Court of Exchequer, 1673.

tenants to have the other of the said keys, to the end, that such tenant or tenants as shall at any time have occasion to view, or peruse the said rolls upon their repair to the keepers thereof, may have a view of the said rolls and a copy thereof, if desired, paying for the search of the said rolls 2s. besides what is payable for the said copy.

11th, If any customary tenant of the said manor alien his customary lands, the same tenant either by himself in proper person, or by his attorney or attornies, tenants of the same manor, must surrender the said lands by rod, pen, or such-like thing, (the steward or deputy steward, or recorder of the said manor then in court being, having the one end thereof, and the surrender the other end) into the hands of the lord of the said manor, to the use and behoof of him to whom the surrender is made, either in fee-simple, fee-tail, general, or special, term of life or lives, or term of years, according to the custom of the said manor. And thereupon the said steward or deputy steward, or recorder is to put the end of the said rod, pen, or such-like thing into the hands of the alienee, or of him unto whose use the surrender is made, granting possession, and seizin of the said lands to hold of the lord of the said manor by the rents and services therefore due, and of right accustomed, paying a fine according to the custom of the said manor.

Customs claimed in the Court of Exchequer, 1673.

12th, If any tenant of any customary lands within the said manor decease, the eldest of his sons according to the custom of the said manor, is his heir; and if he have no son but a daughter, the same is his heir; if more daughters than one, then all of them are his heirs; and if the heir, or heirs be within age at the time of the death of his, or their father, the next parent, kindred or friend, to whom the said lands cannot descend by custom of the said manor, must have the guardianship, governance, and keeping of the said heir or heirs, until he, or they shall attain the age of fourteen years; and also must have the management and disposing of the said lands during the said years, to the use, and for the benefit of the said heir, or heirs.

13th, Two court-leets ought to be kept within the said manor yearly within one month next after Easter, and next after Michaelmas.

14th, One of the ancient customs of the said manor is, that all fines of customary lands are to be one year's ancient copyhold rent, payable out of such customary lands to the lord of the said manor, and not more.

And if at any time the lord of the said manor have out of favour, or other respect to the tenant, from whom such fine was due, accepted of less, yet

hath the value of one year's ancient copyhold rent been accounted the certain bound rate and estimate of the fines due and payable to the lord as aforesaid.

CUSTOMS CLAIMED, BUT NOT DECREED.

15th, Copyholders may at their own pleasure take such timber as groweth upon the customary land within their holding, to repair or build withal, without the assignment of the lord of the said manor, or any officer under him.

16th, All such things as are done by inquest, touching and concerning pains, and ordering the tenants of the said manor are traversable.

17th, All the customary tenants of the said manor ought to pay to the lord, when sufficient mast is within the lord's woods, 3d. for every one of their swine above the age of one year and a half, except for one boar and one sow, which any of the said tenants may keep within the said woods, without payment of any money for the same. And when there is no mast, the said tenants are to pay a certain rate, called Worm Tach, being a half-penny for every swine above one year and a half old, saving a boar and a sow, which are to be free as aforesaid.

18th, Every burgess is to be toll-free and tachfree, paying only free-penny.

19th, The tenants and burgesses of the said manor have had anciently free-common of pasture, except worm tach as aforesaid, for all their commonable cattle in the lord's wood lying within the said manor, (viz.) Northwood, Cotton Wood, and Wem Brockhurst, except spring time; and have also had anciently free-common of pasture in certain waste ground, called Wem Pools.

20th, At every leet, or law-day, the townships, or hamlets of the said manor, do present all the faults presentable within the said townships, and every township, or the greatest part thereof must agree in the said presentment, which presentment must be by the court exhibited to the jury impannelled in the said court, and if the said jury confirm and allow the presentment, then the same presentment is to be of force, otherwise, to be void. And further, if the said jury do present any thing of their own knowledge more than the said presentments of the said townships, or hamlets, or by the oath of any other, the same is good, and then thereupon before the ending and determination of the said court, two affeerors are to be made and have been anciently chosen, the one by the said jury, and the other by the steward of the said court, who are to affeer and

tax all amerciaments in which any person of the said court shall happen to be amerced, which affeerment is to be done impartially, and without favour to the lord, or to the party amerced, and without any controlment of the lord, or of any other officer.

21st, If any presentment be made by the jury at the said leets, or law-days within the said manor, of any bloodshed or affrays, then the persons in such cases offending are to be amerced 3s. 4d. for a bloodshed, 6d. for an affray, and no more.

22nd, Burgesses and borough-hold lands might be alienated and disposed of by parol, or word of mouth till the year 1677, 29th Charles II. when by the statute for the prevention of frauds and perjuries, it was enacted, that all estates except copyhold should be granted and transferred by deed or note in writing signed by the party, that grants or transfers the same. After this for a long time all boroughhold estates were conveyed by deed of feoffment, one of the bailiffs of the town, giving the alienee the possession before witnesses. The bailiff's fee was 1s. and the witnesses were treated with cakes. For several years past on account of privacy, or dispatch borough-hold estates have been conveyed like free-hold, by deeds of lease and release.

23rd, The heriot due to the lord of the manor upon the death of a copy-holder is his best beast,

or for want thereof, his best moveable good. If the copy-holder dwelled out of the lordship, the tenant occupying his lands must pay the heriot. Only one heriot is due, though the copyholder died possessed of several customary messuages, or several parcels of customary lands.

25th, If the widow of a customary tenant have her husband's lands in dower, the heir shall not pay a relief till after the marriage or death of the tenant in dower, but he may be admitted, and the fine respited till such marriage or death does happen.

26th, If a customary tenant in his life time do alien, give, or set his lands for life, or years, his widow shall not have her dower of that land so aliened, sold, given, or set for term of life, or years, but she shall have the rent reserved upon the land set, or let for life, or term of years; and after the death of the tenant for term of life, and after the expiration of the lease for years, the widow shall have the said lands during her widowhood. If she commit waste upon her lands in dower, she shall forfeit the place wasted.

27th, An intail of copyhold whether it be general, or special, is barred by a surrender in court without a recovery; as was proved in a trial at law at Salop assizes, 1738.

CUSTOMS DECREED BY THE COURT OF EXCHEQUER, 1676.

IT was ordered, adjudged, and decreed by the right honourable William Montague, lord chief baron, and the rest of the barons of the court of exchequer.

1st, That the borough-holders within the said manor of Wem may alien their borough-hold estates without surrender.

2nd, That an heriot is payable to the lord upon alienation, or surrender of the whole copyhold estate only, and not upon alienation, or surrender of part of the same.

3rd, That if any person take to his wife any woman inheritrix, customary holder of any customary lands of the said manor, and had or have issue by her, and the same wife deceased, the husband surviving, shall hold all his wife's customary lands during his natural life.

4th, That at the death of every customary tenant which was seized of any estate in fee-simple, or fee-tail general in the said customary lands, the wife of such tenant surviving her husband, shall have and

enjoy all such customary lands as her husband died so seized of during her widowhood, and no longer.

5th, All customary tenants that are seized in feesimple, fee-tail, general, or special of any customary, lands within the said manor, may lawfully cut down, give and sell all the timber-trees, and other trees, growing, and being upon the said customary lands at their will and pleasure without contradiction, or molestation of the lord of the said manor, or of any other.

6th, Every customary tenant and berough-holder ought to appear at the court leets or law days; or in default of appearance at one of the said courts, the maker of such default is to be essoigned with ld. if it be preferred; and at the next leet, or lawday, if such tenant so essoigned, make default in appearing then, to be amerced 6d. and no more.

7th, When any customary tenant of the said manor is disposed to alien or give his customary lands, he may make his letter of attorney to one or two customary tenants of the said manor, to surrender his copyhold lands to any person he shall name in the said letter of attorney, expressing therein the use and estate for which the said surrender is to be made, which letter of attorney cannot be revoked or made frustrate by the maker thereof, but is to

remain good and effectual to him to whose use it was made according to the custom of the said manor, so that the maker of the said letter of attorney at the time of the making thereof, were not an infant, feme covert, or non compos mentis: The court declared, that surrenders of the said customary lands ought to be pursuant to the said letter of attorney, and presented at the next great court following.

8th, The tenants of customary lands within the said manor, may set and let their lands in possession for three years, without the licence of the lord of the said manor.

9th, The yearly rents of customary tenants of the said manor are payable to the lord at two feasts in the year, (viz.) the feast of the annunciation of the blessed Virgin Mary, and the feast of St. Michael the Archangel, by even portions.

10th, The court rolls ought to be kept in or near the said manor of Wem, that the tenant may resort to the same, paying 2s. for every search, besides for the copies.

11th, If any customary tenant of the said manor alien his customary lands, the same tenant either by himself in proper person, or by his attorney or attornies, tenants of the said manor, must surrender

the same lands by rod, pen, or such-like thing, (the steward or deputy steward, or recorder of the said manor then in court being, having the one end thereof in his hand, and surrenders the other end) into the hands of the lord of the said manor, to the use and behoof of him to whom the surrender is made, either in fee-simple, fee-tail, general, or special, term of life or lives, or term of years, according to the custom of the said manor. And thereupon the said steward or deputy steward, or recorder is to put the end of the said rod, pen, or such-like thing into the hands of the said alienee, or of him unto whose use the surrender is made, granting possession, and seizin of the said lands, to hold of the lord of the said manor, by the rents and services thereof due, and of right accustomed, paying a fine according to the custom of the said manor.

12th, If any tenant of any customary lands within the said manor decease, the eldest of his sons according to the custom of the said manor is his heir; and if he have no son but a daughter, the same is his heir; if more daughters than one, then all of them are his heirs. And if the heir or heirs be within age at the time of the death of his, or their father, the next parent, kindred, or friend, to whom the said land cannot descend by the custom of the said manor, must have the guardianship, governance, and keeping of the said heir or heirs, until he, or she accom-

Observations on the said Customs.

plish the age of fourteen years, and also must have the management and disposing of the said lands during the said years, to the use, and for the benefit of the said heir, or heirs.

13th, The court-leets ought to be kept according to the former usage and custom.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE SAID CUSTOMS.

15th, This custom still subsists. It is implied in the 5th, and so there was no occasion to decree it again.

16th, To traverse, is to deny, particularly by standing suit, and bring the matter to a trial at law.

17th, This custom was not decreed by the court, because the lord's woods were then cut down; so that there could be no mast for the tenants' swine, no ponnage due to the lord. And the land where the woods stood being inclosed, the swine could not run there, and consequently worm tach must cease.

18th, Toll is a small sum of money paid for cattle, or goods sold at fairs. Tach was a sum of money paid for herbage of horses and cows in the lord's waste ground; burgesses still pay no toll; they

Observations on the said Customs.

formerly paid only 1d. for tach, that is, for the herbage of the cattle in the Pool lands. This great privilege they lost when those lands were sold and inclosed.

19th, This custom continued till the reign of Edward VI. about which time, certain parcels of the lord's woods, and of Wem Pools were inclosed.

20th, The custom at present is for the constable of every township to return five men, (two or three generally serve for the country hamlets) who are sworn to present what is presentable in their several townships. They carry their presentments to the proper jury, for there are two juries, of which the latter enquires only into things relating to the borough; the former into all matters that concern the rest of the manor; the latter is returned by the bailiffs of the borough, the former by the bailiffs of the manor: Each jury make their presentments on the information of the representatives of the township, their own knowledge, or the oath of any person: at the time they present the offence, they amerce the offender. Then two affeerors, one chosen by the steward, and the other by the jury, who tax and mitigate the amerciament upon oath as they shall think reasonable. After the agreement, the lord of the manor, may by his officer, levy the amerciament upon the goods of the persons so amerced.

Observations on the said Customs.

In the reign of queen Elizabeth, the borough-jury was called the homage within the bar, and the other jury, the homage without the bar.

21st, In a court roll dated February 5th, 1489, 4th Henry VII. all the affrays are amerced 6d. one bloodshed 3s. 4d. another 1s. Hence it appears that though the amerciament for a bloodshed was not to exceed 3s. 4d. yet it might be mitigated and abated, as the condition of the offender, and the circumstances of the offence required.

28th, If a customary tenant would dispose of a copyhold estate by his last will and testament, he must surrender, and take it up in court for the use of his last will.

29th, At every surrender there must be two customary tenants present in court as homagers, or witnesses,

30th, The whole charge of a surrender is 17s. 6d. whereby 13s. belong to the steward, 2s. 6d. to the bailiff of the manor, and 2s. to the homagers.

31st, The surrender is entered into the manorbook, and a copy of it signed by the steward, is at the next great court delivered to the person to whose use the surrender was made. Upon delivery thereof Customs of the Manor of Wem.

10s 6d. is paid to the steward's clerk, as a perquisite, and not as a right.

32nd, In former times, when the feodal tenure was in it's full vigour, and the lord of the manor was obliged to attend the king in his wars, every customary tenant was to serve under the lord, and to be charged according to the value of his lands.

33rd, Formerly at courts baron, causes were tried between the tenants for debts, breach of covenant, or tresspass done, so that the action was under 40s. But at present such actions are usually carried to the hundred court at Wellington.

CUSTOMS OF THE MANOR OF WEM.

T a court leet, court baron, or court of survey of the right honourable Thomas, earl of Bradford, held at Wem, in and for the manor of Wem, Oct. 16th, 1751, before Henry Jenks, gentleman, steward and recorder, twenty-four copyhold or customary tenants of the said manor, being sworn to enquire into, and present the customs incident, and

Customs of the Manor of Wem.

appertaining to their copyhold estates, they did unanimously present the following customs which were approved of and signed by the said steward, Mr. Jenks.

1st, That a tenant in-tail of any copyhold lands, or tenements within the said manor, may, by surrender, bar such in-tail, and all remainders over, as fully and effectually as the same might, or could be barred by fine, or recovery at common law.

2nd, That a reasonable fine at the will of the lord, not exceeding one year's rent is due upon the admission of an heir to the copyhold estate of his ancestor, and also upon the alienation of any copyhold estate within the said manor.

3rd, That a copyholder may surrender his copyhold estate within the said manor by way of mortgage, paying the usual court fees for such surrender, and the defeasance thereupon without paying any fine to the lord.

4th, That when any person hath been admitted to a copyhold estate within the said manor, which was then held by any other person for life, or by any widow for her customary free-bench, that the admission fine hath time immemorially been respited during the continuance of such estate for life, or free-bench.

Customs of the Manor of Wem.

5th, That the homagers to be present at the surrender or admittance of any copyhold estate within the said manor, have, or ought to be named and chosen one of them by the steward, and the other of them by the person or persons named in such surrender or admittance.

6th, That by the custom immemorial, the court rolls and records of the said manor, have heen kept in a chest, or convenient place within the said manor, for the safe and sure keeping thereof, under two locks and keys, and the bailiff or officer of the lord to keep one key, and a customary tenant to keep the other, to the end that such tenant or tenants, as shall have occasion to view and peruse the said rolls, upon applying to the keepers thereof, may have a view of the said rolls and copies thereof, if desired, paying for every search 2s. besides for the copies.

7th, That a court baron ought to be held every three weeks, at which no more should be paid for passing surrenders, or admittances, than what is payable when the great court shall be held.

8th, That no customary tenant may let or devise his copyhold estate for any longer term than three years, without licence from the court, for which he is to pay the lord, 2s. The Borough. Bailiffs and Burgesses of Wem.

THE BOROUGH, BAILIFFS, AND BURGESSES OF WEM.

OROUGH comes from the Saxon word Rurgh, which signifies a fortified place; for anciently, all boroughs were towns fortified with a wall or fence of earth or turf; hence burg-bote was an immunity, or an exemption from contributing to the repair of the borough-wall. These boroughs were inhabited chiefly by a certain number of freemen called Burgesses, who had each a dwelling house, or burgage assigned them with a small proportion of land.

Wem is a very ancient borough, but neither history nor tradition informs us when, or by, whom it was constituted; perhaps the charter of its creation is among the records at Wem; but it was not found among those I had an opportunity to consult. The oldest copy of court roll for any burgess, exhibited at the survey, in the third year of queen Elizabeth, was dated 9th Edward VI.

This borough never sent members to parliament, which may be owing to its erection after the 23rd Edward I. when the constitution of sending burgesses to parliament took place, for the writs then directed to the sheriffs of each county, required them to send up two citizens from every city, and two

The Borough, Bailiffs and Burgesses of Wem.

burgesses from every borough. Several boroughs that did then chose members of parliament after a few returns petitioned, to be excused in future, on account of the expence in maintaining their representatives, to, and from parliament, as well as during the session of it. This expense would induce the boroughs that were soon after created, amongst which, we may reckon this of Wem, to decline a privilege, which at that time, before the rise of bribery and corruption, was considered only as a charge and a burden.

The chief officers of this borough, are two bailiffs elected every year, at the court leet after Michaelmas, one by the lord's steward, and the other by the borough fury. Formerly they had greater authority than they have at present. This may be inferred from their being called at the assizes, among the justices, till on there representation of doctor, then Mr. Eyton, rector of Wem, their appearance for the future was dispensed with. Their office is to execute hivery of seizin, upon the alienation of borough-hold houses or lands, (but this is now superseded by deeds of lease and release) to prevent frauds, by false weights and measures, to return the borough-jury, to wait on the steward at court-leets, to assist at the proclaiming of fairs, and to attend on the sheriff's deputy on the proclamation of war or peace, or of the accession of a king or queen of Great Britain.

The Borough, Bailiffs and Burgesses of Wem.

If there be any other extraordinary occasion of the borough assembling in a body, the bailiffs appear at the head of it.

They have standard measures of brass, of a strike, quart, and pint, by which, once a year they should examine the measures of malsters and alesellers. At the same time they try the weights of all that sell grocery ware, for which they formerly had standard weights; but they are now lost. They have power to seize all false measures and weights; and if any one offers butter to sale that has not sixteen ounces in the pound, they may take and give it to the poor-

The wisdom of antiquity honoured and distinguished the chief officers in boroughs by furred gowns, which were constantly worn by the bailiffs of this town, till the year 1730, when one of the bailiffs could not be prevailed on to be conformable to this custom. This unhappy precedent was soon followed by others, who were willing to be excused the charge of buying new gowns, or the obligation of borrowing old ones; and thus this badge of honour, this decent habit of the bailiffs, that had continued from the rise, and first establishment of the borough began to be slighted, and in a short time to be quite disused.

Formerly, the bailiffs attended by the other gownsmen, (for all had a right to wear gowns that had

The Borough, Bailiffs and Burgesses of Wem-

served the office of bailiff) had entertainments at their houses, and went in procession to church at the four festivals of Christmas, Epiphany, Easter Day, and Whitsunday. But for about half a century since, the taxes increased, and the borough grew poor, hospitality bas been confined to the two first days.

The bailiffs agree within themselves, who shall entertain on Christmas Day, and who on New Year's Day. The burgesses are invited to attend them to church, and in the morning are treated with roast beef and ale, and in the afternoon with ale alone. A dinner is provided for particular friends. In the procession, to, and from church, the bailiff of the manor walks first, with a white rod in his hand, next, the constables of the town with their staves, then the bailiffs of the borough with their staves, followed by the burgesses, and the friends of the bailiff whose day it is.

The profits arising from the bailiff's office are not sufficient to defray this small expense; being only 1s. for giving possession of borough-hold, which of late, seldom, or never happens: 2d. from each malster, aleseller, and dealer in grocery, for examining their measures and weights, and 1d. of every stranger that pitches a standing, or hawks, or sells any thing in the streets.

The Borough, Bailiffs and Burgesses of Wem.

At first the number of burgesses was above eighty, but now there are only seventy-two, which difference is occasioned by several burgages becoming the property one person.

The proportion of land assigned to each burgess, was about a quarter of an acre, and the rent reserved to the lord is 1s. which then was equivalent to 10s. now. The services, to which burgesses are subject, are suit of court, serving the office of bailiff, and carrying an halbert, or procuring a man to do it at the proclamation of fairs, &c. Their bearing this weapon indicates that they were to be a sort of guard to the lord, and defence to the town.

Rurgesses are exempt from paying hitching penny, from all in this borough, and from half-toll in Doddington, adjoining Whitchurch. Formerly they had free common of pasture for all their commonable cattle in the lord's woods, and Wem Pools; which great privilege they lost when the woods were cut down, and the pools drained, and the lands of both sold to several purchasers.

Burgesses transferred their borough-hold either by chart, or by copy of court. This last was the common way in the reign of Henry VIII. and was continued till lord Wycherley attempted to confine them to this method, and to reduce them to the

tenure of copyholders. Upon this, only those who had dependance on him would surrender in court, and in a short time the custom was quite left off: so that at present there is not one burgess that holds by copy of court.

THE RECTORY, AND RECTORS' OF WEM.

Wem, have always gone along with the barony, and when sold to Mr. George Jeffreys, was valued at £1000. It now belongs to the right honourable Richard, earl of Bradford.

This rectory is in the archdeaconry of Salop, but in the deanery of Newport; and in the king's books, it is valued at £26. 4s. 4d. but its real value is above fifteen times as much. It depends on the price and quantity of corn; so that it cannot be fixed with any centainty, but at a medium it may be computed to be worth above £400. a year. Yet doctor Aldrich, farmed it to Mr. Hughes, for £120. per annum; provided that he paid himself, and the two other curates, and became answerable for dilapida-

tions. The parsonage house is a fine building; and the gardens are neat and spacious.

WILLIAM PANTULF, 1st, by granting the advowson and tithes to the abbey of St. Peter, at Norum, reduced the church of Wem to a vicarage. The grant was probably soon revoked by his successor in the barony.

For above six hundred years the rectors of Wem are entirely unknown. In so long a succession there might be many eminently good and learned men: but their circumstances, characters, and names are covered with oblivion. The first that we have an account of, is the Rev. St Lawrence Rocke, who in 16th Edward IV. 1475, obtained letters of fraternity from John Payne, doctor of divinity, and provincial prior of the dominicans, or black friars, in England: who afterwards, in 1483, was made bishop of Meath. in Ireland, by the pope's provision, and in 1493. master of the rolls in Ireland, by the appointment of Henry VII. Mr. Mytton, who was collecting materials for a general history of Shropshire, shewed me his grant fairly written on parchiment, a copy of which I will insert for the sake of the curious.

Devoto et in Christo Jesu sibi dilecto venerabili magistro Domino Lawrence Rocke, rectori, perpetuo Ecclesiæ de Weme, frater Johannes

Payne, sacræ theologiæ professor, ac prior provincialis in provincia Anglicana licet indignus, salutem et augmentum continuum cælestis gratiæ, exigente vestræ devotionis affectu, quem, ad nostrum habes ordinem, tibi omnium missarum. orationum, predicationum, jejuniorum, abstinentiarum, vigiliarum, laborum, cæterorumque bonorum quæ per fratres nostri ordinis, in dicta provincia, Domino fuerunt dedita universales, participationem concedo, tenore presentium, specialem in vita, prout et in morte: volo insuper et ordino ut post decessum vestrum anima vestra fratrum totius provinciæ orationibus recommendata (sit) in uno capitulo provinciali; si vestri ibidem obitus fuerint rememorati, et injunctæ sint pro anima vestra missæ, et annuatim conciones gue pro fratribus defunctis fieri consueverunt. In cujus concessionis testimonio sigillum officii nostri præsentibus est appensum. Datum Salopiæ in festo die Alexir, confessoris, A. D. MCCCC. septuaginta quinto.

IN ENGLISH.

To the religious and beloved in Christ the venerable St. Lawrence Rocke, perpetual rector of the church of Wem, friar John Payne, D. D. and provincial prior, though unworthy, in the province of England, sendeth greeting, in compliance with the

warmth of your affection, which you bear to our order by these presents, I grant to you during your life, and at your death a special share of all the masses, prayers, fasts, abstinancies, Vigit's works, and all other good things, which by the grace of God, may have been done by the friars of our order conjointly in the said Province. I will also, and ordain, that after your decease, your soul be recommended to the prayers of the friars of the whole Province, at a provincial chapter, if hotice be there given of your death, and that blank masses be enjoined for your soul: in testimony of which grant the sent of our office is amexed to these presents, given at Shrewsbury, on the festival of St. Alexius, the confessor, in the year of our Lord 1475.

This is not properly an indulgence, but an admission of Lawrence tranquam frater, to all the spiritual benefits of the order. There is a like grant to brother Jerom, general of the friars, minors to Godfrey, bishop of Worcester, dated at Paris 1277. The last clause runs thus, "ut cum-vester obitus nostro fuerit generali capitulo nunciatus, idem pro vobis fiat officium quod pro fratribus nostris recitatum defunctis retitatis ibidem per totum ordinem annuatim fieri consuevit," (see the appendix to doctor Thomas's account of the bishops of Worcester, No. 51. S. B.) Alcock was admitted by the abbot and monks of Pershore, into their spiritual

fraternity, and made partaker of the merits of their prayers, A. D. 1418, see another copy of such literat fraternitatis, in Stevens's Monast. supplement, p. 144.

The festival of Alexius is 17th July. There is a blank left for the number of masses; perhaps because that might depend on the legacy which St. Lawrence Rocke should devise to the Dominicans by his last will.

When he died, and who succeeded him is unknown. The next rector I can find, was of noble family, (viz.)

JOHN DACRE, a relation of William, lord Dacre, baron of Gillesland, Greystock, and Wem. It is probable he was presented in the reign of Edward VI. 1561, or queen Mary; but it is certain he was rector of Wein on June 29th, in the 3rd queen Elizabeth; for then he was appointed one of the commissioners to survey, and take an estimate of the lordships of Wem, Loppington, and Hinstock, and to oblige the tenants to produce their titles to their messuages, tenements, and lands. He did not sit in court with the other commissioners when the forged charta of the customs, and liberties of the tenants, of Wem; was exhibited to them. On the accession of queen Elizabeth, he thought fit to change his

religion, as most of the clergy then did, to preserve their benefices. He was a pluralist, being rector of Greystock, as well as Wem, which last place he chose for his residence, as appears from his holding in his own hands twenty-four acres of the lord's demesne. He was succeeded by

PETER SANKIE, who was rector of Wem 30th queen Elizabeth, 1588. For on May 30th that year, some lands in Tilley then held by him, of Lawrence Bannister, of Wem, esq. were surrendered in court, to the use of Richard, son of the said Lawrence, for a certain number of years, but this proviso, if Peter Sankie continue so long rector of Wem. Had it not been for this condition, posterity would not have known that there had been such a man, or that he had the honour of being rector of this parish.

RICHARD SANKIE, perhaps the son of Peter, comes next in order of time. His memory is preserved only by an entry in the parish register, dated March 14th, in the 11th James I. 1613, at which time he licenced Richard Ward, gentlman, to eat flesh in Lent, for recovery of his health. This licence is written with his own hand, in the presence, and with the consent of the church wardens, pursuant to an act of parliament in 5th queen Elizabeth. Perhaps doctor Sankie, rector of Whitchurch, was grandson of this gentleman, who dying out of this

parish, the time of his decease is uncertain; but he could not long survive the entry above mentioned; for four years after this,

WILLIAM ROE was rector of Wem, and had a son born unto him in this parish, 1617. He signed the petition addressed to Ann, countess of Arundel. He had many children by his wife Robina, and dying at the parsonage house in Wem, Nov. 12th, 1637, was buried in the church 13th Charles I. without any monument, or inscription, as a memorial of him. He was succeeded by

NICKOLAS PAGE, doctor of divinity, who in June 18th, 1642, Charles I. was assessed £1.5s. as his proportion of the last tax that had the royal assent. He was fallen into very troublesome times, but had the good fortune to be taken from the evils to come: For he died at Wem, January 13th, 1643 following, and was buried there, on 15th of the same month, without so much as an epitaph on the stone that covers his remains.

MIDCALF, doctor of divinity, was presented next to this rectory, but had scarce got possession thereof before he was ejected by the garrison, which the parliament had settled there, in October 1643, in the same year. He was succeeded by

ANDREW PARSONS, who was born in Devonshire, and had been minister there some years before the war began; but being driven thence to London, he became well known to Mr. Pym, who procured for him the rectory of Wem, 1647. In 22nd Charles I. he was by ordinance of parliament, constituted a member of the North Bradford class, for the ordination of Ministers. And September 16th, 1657, 9th Charles II. he concurred with some others in that class, in ordaining Mr. Philip Henry, at Prees, 1660. The restoration was not agreeable to him. Towards the end of the year, in which it happened, he preaching on 2nd Timothy, 3rd and 13th. " But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived," he observed, that the devil was like a king, that courted the soul, and spoke fair, till he was gotten into the throne, and then played the pranks. These words were taken to be seditious, and upon information given thereof, he was arrested, and carried to Shrewsbury gaol, where he was long confined. On May 28th and 29th, 1661, the next year he had his trial, Francis, lord Newport being then in court. The witnesses against him were Mr. Edward Astley, of Aston, Mr. Richard Jebb, commonly called, steward Jebb, Mr. Thomas Jebb, mercer, and Mr. Slarkey, apothecary, They deposed, that he said the king was like the devil, &c. But as this was not consistent with the coherence of his discourse, so it was invalidated by the testimony

of several persons, who had taken his sermon in short hand. He was also charged with saying there is more sin committed now in England in a month. than was heretofore in seven years. And that there had been more, and better preaching in England for twenty, years past, than was ever since the Apostle's days. His counsel pleaded, that the time limited by the statute on which he was indicted, was expired. The court yielded it was so, allowing but twentyeight days to a month, which, in their opinion, did consist of thirty, so he was found guilty, fined £200. and ordered to be kept in prison till it should be paid. He continued a prisoner near three months, till the lord Newport, without his knowledge, procured the king's remittance of his fine. On August 24th, 1662, 14th Charles II. the church wardens having put a surplice, and a common prayer book in the desk, he would neither read the one, nor wear the other. Upon his shutting the book, and refusing to comply with the act of uniformity, the church wardens pulled him out of the desk. A company of soldiers had been posted in the church yard, to assist the parish officers, in case of resistance, but none was made. He removed to London, whence he sent a printed letter to Wem in 1677, on occasion of the then late dreadful fire. By Mary, his wife, he had a numerous issue. He was a devout, and religious man, a laborious, and pathetic preacher, but deeply infected with puritanical principles. His death happened in London, October 1st, 1684.

REESE HUHGES, a welsh man, succeeded him at Wem 1662, through the interest of col. Screven Fradgley, whose sister Mr. Hughes married. He could never speak English like a native, was a mean preacher of the gospel, and worse æconomist in his secular affairs, which involved him in troubles, and occasioned him to be cast into gaol. On May 27th, 1670, 22nd Charles II. he was buried at Wem, leaving his family to subsist on the charity of their relations, His successor was

then lord of the manor of Wem. He is memorable only for his ill conduct, and for his misfortunes. His expenses vastly exceeded his revenues; so that being embarassed with many debts, 1684, 36th Charles II. all the profits of the rectory were sequestered for the payment of the curates. The unfortunate rector being cast into prison by his own father, after several years confinement at Shrewsbury, he was removed to the Fleet prison, where he was buried January 3rd, 1689, in that year when the throne was vacant, by the abdication of James II. By his wife Dorothy, he had a daughter, Letitia Issabella, who was born in 1680, and died in 1685. Wem glories next in

HENRY ALDRICH, D. D. born in London, about 1647, educated probably at Westminster school,

admitted student of Christ's church, Oxford. After he had taken his degrees in arts, he travelled several years in foreign countries. 1682. February 5th, 34th Charles II. he was installed canon of Christ's church: and March 2nd following, accumulated both his degrees in divinity. 1689. June 17th, 1st William and Mary, he was by the king preferred to the deanery of Christ's church, and by the trustees of John, lord Jeffreys, to the rectory of Wem. From this rectory he received but £120 per annum, and the last three years but £100. In 1692, 93rd and 94th, he was vice chancellor of the university. If we consider him as an author, he was more careful to write well than to write much. In 1694 he printed for the use of his particular friends, a few copies of element a geometrical, duo breviter illus-From the Greek of Plutarch, he translated into English, the life of Eumenes.

In 1687, he published a reply to two discourses of Mr. Woodhead, concerning the adoration of our Saviour in the Eucharist. In the same year, came out at Oxford, the four first books of Josephus's antiquities, and part of the 5th, with notes of Edward Bernard; and the first book and part of the 2nd of the Jewish war, with the notes of Henry Aldrich. His annotations are succinct, but learned. In 1696, he printed his excellent compendium of Logic, composed for the use of Charles Boyle, esq. afterwards

earl of Orrey. He was a great encourager, and promoter of learning of every kind in other men, and excelled in so great a variety of branches of it himself, as to be had in admiration of the age in which he lived, as well as of that famous house of literature over which he presided. He took great delight in music and architecture, which few understood better than he did. Of several anthems composed by him, that which he made on his deliverance from shipwreck, was particularly admired. building in Peckwater shewed his skill in architecture: He lived to see three sides of that quadrangle finished. Had his model been followed, and the south side raised uniformly with the rest, it would have been the most exact, and beautiful structure in England. At his death he left his large and curious library, and fine collection of cuts and music books to Christ church. William Bromley, esq. gave his picture to that college library, admirably drawn to the life, by sir Godfrey Kneller. And George Clarke, esq. one of the representatives of the university in parliament, erected for him, an handsome monument of white marble on the northside of the choir, with this inscription round his head, Henricus Aldrich, S. T. P. Ædis Christi Decanus grande lotius academiæ ornamentum. His epitaph is thus continued in a scroll of white marble below.

Vivit vir chrissimus annos 63,

Ob. 19 Cal. Jan. 1710,

Ne cineres defuncti

Sine nomine et titulo

Diutius neglecti jacerent,

Geo. Clarke, qui vivum coluit et amavil,

A. M. B. M. fecit A. D. 1792.

His stature was large, his features agreeable, his complexion ruddy, which his grey hair did well become.

EDWARD CHANTLER, D. D. was the next rector. 1711. His first step to preferment, was his being chaplain to doctor Lloyd, bishop of Lichfield, and Coventry, who gave him the vicarage of Prees, worth about £140. per annum. Whilst he was possessed of this living on which he did not reside, he built the best part of the vicarage house, and kept thirty children to school, paying for their teaching, and for their books. He had also a lease of the great tithes, which he afterwards sold to Mrs. Barber. He married Barbara, the sister of sir Humphrey Brigges, then member of parliament for Wenlock, in the county of Salop, a gentleman of great prudence, and discretion, by whom he had two sons, and several daughters. Many children are generally thought an impoverishment of a family; but he was of a different opinion. I have heard him say, that he never had a child born but he had some

new preferment, or accession to his fortune. So that the increase of his substance was proportioned to the increase of his family. When his patron, bishop Lloyd was removed to Worcester in 1699, he soon procured doctor Chandler to be made a canon of that church; and in 1706, gave him the rectory of St. Nicholas, in Worcester, on account of which, he resigned Prees. In 1711, by the interest of sir Humphrey Brigges, he was presented by Henry, lord Newport, to the rectory of Wem. Wherever it was his fortune to be minister, he made great improvements in the building. The parsonage house at Wem was almost wholly rebuilt by him, and will remain a lasting monument of him. 1717, by the interest of doctor Gibson, then bishop of Lincoln, he was advanced to the episcopal dignity, and made bishop of Lichfield, and Coventry. In 1730, he was translated to Durham, the richest bishoprick in England. He lived in a very handsome manner, and yet was a great œconomist. He was the first rector of Wem that kept his coach. He was used to spend a month or two here in the summer, and then retire to Worcester. reckoned a very good preacher, some of his sermons are in print. But that which has distinguished him most as an author, is his defence of christianity against Collins, dedicated to the king, and pub-This is a very learned and elaborate lished in 1725. performance, and has passed through several editions. In 1728, he published a vindication of the

defence of christianity, in two vols. with a letter from the Rev. Mr. Mason, concerning the religion of the Macrobins, and his testimony, touching the slaughter of the infants at Bethlehem, with a post-script on Virgils, 4th ecloque. Books were his diverson, and he allotted several hours in a morning, and afternoon, for his study. After he was made bishop, he held Wem a year in commendam; and therefore in his primary visitation, in 1718 he passed by Wem, though he went to all the other markets towns about it.

July 20th, 1750, he died at his house Grosvenor Square, London, and 24th was buried at his seat, at Farmham-Royal, in Buckinghamshire.

ROBERT EYTON, D. D. (1718,) was born at Shrewsbury in March 1681, being the younger son of a good family seated at Crigion, in Montgomeryshire. He had his education at the schools of Donnington, Shropshire; and Ruthin, Denbighshire; and at St. John's college, Cambridge. Having taken the degree of bachelor of arts, he entered into holy orders, and accepted of a small curacy near Crigion, but soon removed to a much better at Saint Edmondsbury, under Mr. Butts, whose eldest daughter Elizabeth he married. About 1709, on the death of the Rev. John Eyton, rector of Eyton, in the Wildmores, and vicar of Wellington, he was presented to the said rectory, and Mr. Wood to the

vicarage. On Mr. Wood's death, he succeeded him in the vicarage of Wellington, having taken the degree of master of arts, and being admitted chaplain to Richard, earl of Bradford, to qualify himself for a plurality. In 1713, 14th Henry, lord Newport being a candidate for knight of this shire, Mr. Eyton brought him in a great number of voters; on which account, that lord who had been aquainted with him at Donnington school, made him a promise of the rectory of Wem, when it should become va-In 1717 doctor Chandler, the incumbent thereof, was made bishop of Coventry, and Lichfield, and so the king had ordered; but lord Newport had so much interest in the crown, that the presentation was procured for Mr. Eyton in 1718. On this occasion, he was obliged to resign the rectory of Eyton, and not without much difficulty, procured a dispensation for keeping Wellington, In 1725, he was put into the commission of the peace for the county of Salop; and acting as a justice with doctor Egerton, bishop of Hereford, and somtimes attending him to his diocese, that bishop gave him the prebend of Moreton and Whaddon, belonging to his cathedral. April 11th, 1738, Potter, archbishop of Canterbury, conferred on him the degree of doctor of divinity, upon the recommendation of his brother in law, doctor Butts, then bishop of Norwich, but next month translated to Ely. September 1742, the same bishop Butts promoted him to the archdeaconry of Ely, worth £120, per annum, besides casual fines,

for one of which he received £1500. June 1743, the paternal estate at Crigion, valued £500. per annum, by his eldest brother dying intestate, fell At this time it was subject to many debts and mortgages, which the doctor discharged as far as they came to his knowledge. In Autumn, 1745, he had a stroke of the palsy, which very much affected his voice, and gave his constitution so great a shock, that it visibly declined afterwards. 1749, his sister Mrs. Young, left him at her decease, a good house in Nottingham, which he has since In the begining of the year 1751, a swelling appeared in his feet, which those about him, called the gout, till it plainly discovered itself to be a Under this distemper he lingered much longer than his physician conceived possible, and died on the 18th of October, in the same year,

He was a tall handsome personable man. His voice was strong, distinct, and agreeable. His deportment in divine service was not always grave and serious, but no one could behave better when he was so disposed. He had very good natural parts, but was too indolent to take pains to cultivate them by reading and study.

SAMUEL SMALLBROKE, M. A. presented to the rectory, by the countess Dowager of Mountrath, and inducted October 31st, 1751.

THE CURATES OF WEM.

BRNARD was the first curate of Wem that I have met with, (1558.) In the last year of queen Mary, he refused burial to William Glover, gent. whose brother Robert had been tied at the stake at Coventry, September 20th, 1555. His eldest brother John being informed against to the bishop of Coventry, and Lichfield, a warrant was sent to the mayor of Coventry to apprehend him, but the mayor had given him some private notice, he fled with his youngest brother William, which last came to Wem, and there died; being brought to the parish church to be buried, Bernard the curate would not suffer him to be interred, but rode to the then bishop of the diocease, doctor Ralph Barnes, to ask him of the matter, and to receive his orders how he should act in it. In the mean time the corpse lying unburied a whole day, one Richard M——— a taylor, in the night time attempted to bury him, but was hindered by John Thurlin and others, so that the corpse lay above ground two days and a night, till the curate returned with the bishop's letter, directed to the parish of Wem; this Glover, for all the time he had been known in this country, was accounted a rebel against our holy faith and religion, a contumer of the holy sacrament, and ceremonies used in the holy church, and had separated himself from the

communion of all good christian men, and never required to be reconciled to our holy mother church, and in his last days did not call for his ghostly father, but died without all rites belonging to a christian man, for these reasons, he (the said bishop) thought it good not only to command the curate of Wem, that he should not be buried in a christian manner, but also to require and command all the parish of Wem, that no man procure help or speak, to have him buried in the holy ground, but especially the church wardens to assist the curate in hindering him from being buried in the church, or churchyard. He also charged those that brought the body to the church, to carry it away again at their own expense, as they would answer it at their peril. Dated at Eccleshall, September 6th, 1558.

By virtue of this order, those persons who had brought the corpse, should carry it away again at their own charge; but it being changed, and smelt so strong, that no bearers could endure it, they put it in a dung cart, and buried it in a broom field. Bernard continued curate of Wem when Fox wrote this part of his martyrolygy, which must have been in the reign of queen Elizabeth, and so he lived to change his principles, and to profess the same religion that Glover had before him. I suppose he was curate under the rector Dacre.

JOHN JEFFERY seems to have been curate under doctor Page in 1640. For in 1640 there is fairer entry than ordinary in the register of the baptism of Johnna, daughter of John Jeffery Clerk, and Sarah his wife.

HAINS was curate under Mr. Wycherley, with an allowance of £80. per annum, in 1670. He was much beloved, and esteemed for his exemplary life, conversation, and pathetical preaching whereby he often drew tears from a great part of his audience. Mr. Wycherley dismissed him in 1674, when he came to reside here himself; whereupon Mr. Hains got the care of a chapel in Westminster, and died there in 1680.

ROBERT SMITH succeeded him at Wem 1674, Mr. Wycherley removed him hither from Edstaston chapel, and as soon as he kept house, gave him his board. This civility cost Mr. Smith dear, for entering inte bonds, and giving securities for the rector, he was forced to quit his county, to save his liberty.

ROBERT MATTHEWS supplied his place in 1684, and officiated here when the profits of the rectory were sequestered, for the payment of the curates. He had the voice of Stentor, so that he could be heard at a great distance from the church. He continued four years under doctor Aldrich, till he was preferred by sir John Bridgman.

MOSES HUGHES succeeded him in 1693, being put iff either by doctor Aldrich, or Mr. Thomas Barnes of the Lowe, who had farmed the profits of the rectury. As soon as Mr. Barnes's term was expired, the Glebe and tithes were leased to

RICHARD BLAKEWAY, in 1696, who was now curate of Wem. He was the son of Richard Blakeway, of Berrington, in the county of Salop, gent. he married Elizabeth, fifth daughter of John Cotes, of Wood-Cotes, esq. He died of a consumption, January 8th, 1697-8, in the thirty-fourth year of his age, and was buried in Wem church, within the communion rails. His epitaph represents him as a most accomplish person. Vir undequaque desideratissimus.

MOSES HUGHES succeeded him in the curacy, and in the farm of the rectory, in 1698. He was born at Shiewsbitry, of mean parents, his father being a bargeowner. Whilst he was at the free school in that Town, he was remarkable for his uncommon strength and courage; which recommended him to the favour of young sir Vincent Corbet, of Acton Reynold, who took him with him to the University, and maintained him there. Mr. Hughes married one of the old lady Corbet's women, by whom he had two sons, Vincent, and Robert. Once a year he took a journey to Oxford, where he paid doctor

Aldrich £120. and the three last years only £100. for the whole profits of the rectory; but he then paid the curates, and was responsible for taxes, and dilapidations, which last cost his widow and executrix £80. One field in the township of Wem, still bears his name, which is now in my possession, and which he purchased in 1706, of Mrs. Jane Hotchkis, of Wem. A field in Tilley was given him by Sarah Higginson, of that Town, in consideration of his care of, and some money he had advanced towards the maintainance of her son John, at one of He was a free generous man, and the Universities. his good nature might have injured his family, had it not been put under great restraints by his wife. Sudden and violent starts of anger were his greatest He turned Mrs. Haw from the communion table, refusing to give her the sacrament. Complaint was made to bishop Hough, and Mr. Hughes was obliged to vindicate his conduct. He did it with so much heat, that his diocesan told him, that passion was the devil, and that he was strongly possessed The dissenters were very odious to him. he was railing against them in the pulpit, one Sherrat spoke aloud, that he preached false doctrines. the evening he defended it in church, from some authors, which he had brought with him, one of which, was doctor Hammond. In 1708, being presented by the dean, and Chapter, of Christ church, Oxford, to the vicarage of Froddesham, in the county

of Chester, he employed Mr. Gardener to supply the curacy of Wem, but in 1710, Mr. Gardener obtaining the curacy of Newtown, Mr. Hughes returned to Wem, for the sake of his health. In the beginning of next year, doctor Chandler being then rector of Wem, sent Mr. Hughes notice, to quit the curacy, which he took so much to heart, that he did not For March 29th, 1711, he was buried in Wem church, within the communion rails. Edwards, the head master of the school, composed his epitaph, in which he observes, that he streneously maintained the doctrine of the church of England, was friendly, just, peaceable, courteous, grateful, bountiful, and pious; as to his person, he was low of stature, but very broad set.

THOMAS COOK, in 1711, was his successor, but being very soon removed to Newtown chapel, I shall meet with him there,

LAWRENCE GARDNER, 1711, a younger son of the Gardeners, of Sansaw, near the Clive, was removed from Newtown to Wem, because doctor Chandler thought him more capable of transacting the business, and managing the concerns of this large parish, than Mr. Cook. For he received, and disbursed money, set, and gathered tithes, employed workinen, paid taxes, and the curates' salaries, and accounted to the rector for the overplus. On the

death of Mr. Markham, about 1715, he made interest, by doctor Chandler, for Wroxeter, which was promised to another. But lord Bradford offered him Donnington, and Uppington, of about £70. per annum value, but he refused them, because he would not be confined to a school. In 1717, the earl of Bradford presented him to the vicarage of High-Ercal, in the county of Salop, where he married one of the daughters of his predecessor, Mr. Blakeway, a virtuous gentlewoman, whose want of fortune was abundantly made up by good humour, and good To reward him for his prudent management at Wem, bishop Chandler conferred on him the rectory of Copenhall, in Cheshire, and afterwards a prebend in the church of Lichfield. Having now a large income, riches flowed in very fast, and he became a moneyed man. After he had been some years at Ercal, he began to be afflicted with the stone and gravel, for which, he could find no cure, though he tried various remedies, and amongst the celebra-He died, November, 1750, ted Stephenso'.

He was large of stature, inclining to be corpulent, careless of his dress. He did not distinguish himself as a preacher, or a scholar; but his family, and his preferments made him considerable among the clergy. He had a due sense of religion, scorned to do an unjust thing, was charitable to the poor, and hospitable to his acquaintance; but he was a little

tiquipled with vapours, too apt to resent any slight; and when provoked, to fall into a passion.

GEORGE TYLER was the next curate of Werns in 1727, though ten years intervened between the resignation of Mr. Gardner, and his admission: was born in or about London, where his mother lived. whilst his father was engaged in the sea service. Being left an orphan, without any provision for his subsistance, he was sent to his aunt Groom, at Wem. afterwards Mrs. Walford, who having no child of hen own. entertained him as such. She maintained him at the free school, and afterwards at Trinity college, in Cambridge, where he took the degree of batchelor of arts. He was ordained at Ely, or Norwich, and having for some time assisted doctor Whinfield, at Hadenham, in the isle of Ely, he returned to Wem, and in 1720, succeeded Mr. Blakeway in his chapelry of Newtown. Not long after he married Anna one of the daughters of Mr. Collier, of Petton, and vicar of Great Nesse. In 1727, Mr. Eyton removed, him to Wem, and in 1736 procured him the rectory. of Petton. A little before Midsummer, in 1738, he was seized with a nervous disorder, which affected. his head, and rendered him incapable of executing the duty of his curacy; whereupon, in November in the same year, he resigned it, and in 1741 returned to his first curacy, that of Newtown chapel. His aunt, Walford made him her heir, and left him a freehold.

estate of about £30. per annum. His uncle Tyler, of Darleston, left him £200. in money. And he had at least £45. a year from his rectory and curacy of And yet, though he had no child, no losses, no visible ways of expending more than ordinary, his building excepted, he consumed his income, and his estate, and left his widow only a house and gar-The house he built lies in Noble-Street, and now belongs to the Presbyterian meeting-house: which could he have foreseen, he would never have He gave to Wem church, or rather executed the will of his aunt Walford, in giving a branch candlestick of brass, which cost him about £15. He died at Wem, January 14th, 1747, aged 52, and was buried in the church, with an inscription on the stone that covers him.

SAMUEL GARBET, my only son, succeeded, though not immediately, in the curacy of Wem, the place of his nativity and education, 1740. In 1734, he was admitted into Christ church college, Oxford, where he took the degrees of bachelor, and master of arts. He was ordained deacon, by doctor Peploe, bishop of Chester, and priest, by doctor Smallbroke, bishop of Lichfield, and Coventry, who pitched upon him to preach the ordination sermon. After he had continued above six years in this curacy, he found the duty incident to it, too great for a weak constitution; and for this reason, chose to resign it at the end of

1746, and the next year accepted of the perpetual curacy of Newtown.

ARTHUR SPENDER succeeded him at Wem, March 25th, 1747. He was born in the parish of Cheswardine, in the county of Salop, educated at Newport, in the same county, from whence he was removed to Magdalen Hall, Oxford, where he took the degree of bachelor of arts. Whilst he was curate at St. Ives, in the county of Huntingdan, he married a gentlewoman of good fortune, who after she had borne him two sons, had the misfortune to grow melancholy, or distracted. Whilst he officiated under Mr. Pigot, at Tibberton, and Edgmond, in Shropshire, he prevailed on his father to sell a small estate at Cotton, in the parish of Wem; and with the money arising from it, he purchased the advowson of the vicarage of Hadlow, in Kent. the old incumbent died, and Mr. Saxby, and lord Vane entered their caveats against Mr. Spender, who brought his quare impedit, and for a sum of money, got them to withdraw their caveats. June 24th, 1750, he resigned his curacy at Wem, and set out for his living, to which he had been instituted, and inducted, in the beginning of the year. He was tall, and corpulent, insomuch, that he was reported the biggest man in the parish. He was very diligent in visiting the sick, which gained him the esteem of many His reading of divine service was not people.

at all agreeable; but he was much admired for his preaching; and no wonder that he was so, since he preached the best sermons that he could procure, either in print, or M. S. being incapable of composing himself. He died in 1753.

Oxford, succeeded to this curacy, September 29th, 1750. He still retained his scholarship on that foundation; had about two years served one of the cures at Malpas, and doctor Moore was very desirous that he should continue longer. But he had prematurely engaged himself to doctor Eyton, who would not release him. He is an ingenious young man, and has the character of a good preacher. But having a weak constitution, too great application to his studies, threw him into a consumption; and that disorder increasing, his voice failed, his spirits sunk, and though he had great assistance, he was not able to do the business of the curacy, which he resigned on the 18th of July, 1751.

THE FOUNDER OF WEM SCHOOL.

SIR THOMAS ADAMS, KNIGHT AND BARONET.

WHE Adamses were originally settled in Northwood, a hamlet in the parish of Wem. There

in the reign of queen Elizabeth, Randal Adams held of the lord of Wem, a messuage and fifteen acres and a half of land, which probably he afterwards purchased. He had two sons. William who succeeded him in the estate at Northwood, and died in 1598; and Thomas, who was a farmer at Wem. This Thomas Adams married Margaret, daughter of John Erpe, of Shrewsbury, and lived in the house, which, before the fire, stood on that ground where now is the dwelling house of the head master. His tanpits, where he exercised his trade, were in that yard, where is now the school, its court and garden. and that plot on the other side the brook, where the business is still carried on. By his care and industry, he purchased an estate, in and about Wem, of about £25. a year. By Margaret, his wife, he had three sons. 1st, John, born 1584; 2nd, Thomas, born 1586, and baptized December 6th, that year; 3rd, William, born 1594. John, the eldest, was a farmer, inherited his father's estate at Wem, and died S. P. in 1631. Thomas seems to have been designed for the ministry; for he had his education at Cambridge, and took a degree there. But a more gainful prospect opening in the way of trade, he quitted the university, and applied himself to the business of a draper, in London. Here God so blessed his endeavours, that he grew rich, and married Ann, daughter of Humphrey Mapsted, of Trenton, in Essex, by whom he had five sons, and four

daughters, of whom, only three daughters, and one son did survive him.

In 1631, he succeeded to the estate at Wem, on his brother dying without issue.

In 1639, he was chosen sheriff of the city of London; of which, one of his sons in law bringing him the news, he immediately dismissed the business he was about, and never after personally followed his trade, but gave himself up to the city concerns.

January 11th, 1641-2, his wife died, who on her monument, has the character of uxor dulcissima.

In 1646, he was lord mayor of London, in which station he scorned to make the usual advantage of selling places. The rebels imagining, that he concealed the king, searched his house, and pulled him out of bed by the heels.

The next year, 1647, he was committed to the Tower with his lord mayor, and two other aldermen. About this time he sent £1000. in gold to the king, then confined at Hampton court.

April 23rd, 1648, he and the other two aldermen refused to be carried before the lords, by the lieutenant of the Tower, and sent a petition to the

lords assembled in parliament, with the reasons why they could not submit to their lordships' jurisdiction, nor answer before them to articles of impeachment of high treason, and other misdemeanors. 1649, They were degraded from the dignity of aldermen.

In 1650, Thomas Adams, esq. founded the free school at Wem, and endowed it with the messuage and lands he had in, and about that town. But being sensible that his endowment would not be sufficient for the maintainance of three masters, he put the feoffees in a method to augment it by the contributions of others.

In 1654, and 1656, he was burgess of parliament for the city of London; but the iniquity of the times would not permit him to take his seat there. In these perilous times, he harzarded his estate and life, by remitting large sums of money to king Charles II. the total amounting to £10,000.

For the benefit of the Eastern people, by promoting the Christian religion among them, at the desire of Mr. Wheelock, he was at the charge of printing the Gospels in Persian, and transmitting them into those parts; thereby (to use his own expression) throwing a stone at the forehead of Mahomet the Great.

May 11th, 1660, he (though above seventy-three years old) was one of the twenty most substantial citizens, whom the city of London sent as their commissioners, to wait on king Charles II. at the Hague, with a present of £10,000. and assurances of their fidelity, and submission; for which service, he and the rest of the deputies were knighted. And June 3rd, in that same year, he was advanced to the higher degree of a baronet. He was now restored to his place of alderman, and in a few years became the father of the city. He was a vigilant president of St. Thomas's Hospital, which probably would have been ruined, if his sagacity, and industry had not discovered the fraud of an unjust steward.

In 1666, he founded an Arabic lecture at Combridge, and settled upon the lecturer £40, per annum, to be paid by the Drapers' company for ever-In his latter years he sustained many great damages to his estate, and some crosses in his near relations, particularly the death of four of his sons. He also suffered much pain from the stone in his bladder, which had been growing forty years, and when taken out, weighed twenty-five ounces. It is still preserved in the Laboratory at Cambridge. His water had a passage through a channel in the said stone, otherwise the stoppage of his urine must have added to his pain, and shortened his days. It killed him at last, for stepping out of his coach, he happened to fall, which gave his bladder such a shock, that it forced

the stone down, and stopped the urinal passage. He died February 24th, 1667—8, and in the eighty-second year of his age. March the 10th following, he was buried at Saint Catharine's, Cres-church, of which parish he had been afteen years the chief inhabitant. Doctor Hardy, one of the king's chaplains in ordinary, preached his funeral sermon on Acts ch. 13th, v. 36th, and the same year printed it, and dedicated to his son, sir William Adams. Sir Thomas's body did not lye long here, before it was removed to Sprowston, in Norfolk, where he has a monument, with a long and elegant epitaph, reciting the most remarkable events of his life.

He was a personable man; when young, handsome; when old, venerable, and yet amiable. His piety to God, and loyalty to the king was exemplary. He was another Aristides for integrity, another Moses for nieekness. In the court of aldermen, he was an oracle; in his family a pattern of every private Schismatical conventicles he abhorred, but duly frequented the church assemblies. Great was his respect for the orthodox clergy; those that were sufferers, he charitably relieved; those who were labourers, he bountifully encouraged. When a private tradesman, he was diligent, and exact in his bargains, and contracts; and when a public magistrate; he made it his business to understand, and maintain the liberties and privileges of the city, and to do justice between the citizens.

The principal Benefactors to the School at Wem.

standing his public charities, and that in private he had been very liberal to the poor, and the fatherless whilst he lived, yet he left considerable legacies to the poor of several parishes, to hospitals, to ministers, to widows, &c. at his death.

He purchased estates in Edstaston, and Northwood, in the parish of Wem, to the value of £285. per annum. Another estate he bought at Sprowston, in Norfolk, which was designed for the seat of the family. His grandson sir Charles resided at Sprowston Hall; but left none of the above mentioned estates to his brother sir Robert Adams, the present baronet. Sir Charles was buried at Ealing, in Middlesex, where it is probable his grandfather had purchased an estate.

THE PRINCIPAL BENEFACTORS TO THE SCHOOL AT WEM.

	£.	8.	d.
Rowland Hill, of Soulton, esq	20	0	0
Mr. Wm. Adams, of London, merchant,	5 0	0	0
Mr. Edward Astley, of Aston,	6	10	0
Mr. Thos. Barnes, of Lowe, sen. and jun.	25	10	0
Mr Richard Ward, of Cotton,	5	0	0
Mr. Richard Jebb, of Wem, steward, .	11	10	0
Mr. Thomas Jebb, of Wem, mercer,	9	10	0
Mr. John Moody, of Horton,	5	15	0
Mr. John Groom, of Sleap, yeoman,	5	0	0

The principal Benefactors to the School at Wem.

The principal desensoiors to the school at welli-			
	£.	8.	d.
Mr. Richard Menlove, of the Foxholes,	6	13	4
Mr. Thomas Payne, of Edstaston,	5	. 0	0
Mr. Richard Higginson, of Wem,	5	0	0
Mr. Roger Spenlove, of Tilley,	7	11	6
Rev. Mr. Andrew Parsons, rector of Wem,	13	0	0
Mr. William Allanson, of Wem,	5	0	0
Mr. S. and Mr. J. Smith, of Wem, mercers,	10	18	4
Mr. John Sherrat, of Wem, butcher, .		15	0
Mr. Samuel Watkis, of Aston,	5	3	0
Mr. John Hayward, of Tilley, sen. & jun.	10	0	0
Mr. Richard Goldisbrough, of Ryebank,		3	0
Mr. Richard Donn, of the Lowe,	5	0	0
Mr. Richard Higginson, of Creamore, .	5	0	0
Mr. Thomas Peat, of Horton, yeoman, .	5	0	0
	11	10	0
Mr. John Chettoe, of Horton,	6	15	0
Mr. John Chambre, of Wolverley,	22	0	0
Mr. Richard Menlove, of Aston,	6	6	8
Mr. John Shenton, of Wem, mercer, .	5	0	0
Sir Francis Kynaston, of Oatley,	5	0	0
Charles Mainwaring, of Ightfield, esq	5	0	0
Mr. R. Thorp, of Wem, timber-merchant,	8	1	5
Mr. Thomas Pidgeon, of Booley,	6	0	0
Rev. R. Roderick, of Wem, head master,	5	0	0
Rev. doctor H. Alderidge, rector of Wem,	20	0	0
Rev. C. Roderick, of Wem, head master,		0	0:
Mr. Thomas Payn, of Nonerley,	9	4	6
Mr. William Walford, of Lee Brockhust,	7	10	6.
The Rev. S. Garbet, of Wem, 2nd master,	5	0	Q

An Account of Wem School.

The success, and integrity of the first feoffees, are evident from the purchases they made for the school. For January 1st, 1655, they laid out L350. in buying two messuages, with the lands belonging to them in Northwood, in the parish of Wem, being part of the estate of John Broomhal, of Northwood Hall, gentleman; and in 1659 they paid L120. for a mill, messuage, and lands in Cotton, in the said parish of Wem, which they purchased of Mr. Minshul.

Here it will be proper to give an account of the intended benefaction of Edward Carswell, late of Blacklands, in the parish of Bobbington, in the county of Stafford, gentleman, who by his will dated February 3rd, 1669, devised all his messuages, lands, tenements, and hereditaments, in the counties of Salop and Stafford, then valued at between four and L500, a year, to certain trustees, for the term of five hundred years, upon several trusts therein mentioned, and since determined, and after the determination thereof, he devised the residue of the said term, and inhance of the said estates for ever, for the maintainance of eighteen scholars in the college of Christ church, in the university of Oxford; by allowing each of them for four years whilst they are under-graduates L18. 11s. and after they have taken their bachelor's degree, the sum of L21. 11s. yearly for three years, and after they have commenced masters of arts, the sum of L27. 11s. yearly,

An Account of Wem School.

for three years, and no longer. He proposed; that four scholars should be elected out of Shrewsbury school, three from Bridgenorth, four from Newport. three from Shiffnal, two from Wein, and two from Donnington school. If the rents and profits of the estates should be improved, and increased; then a greater number of scholars were to be proportionably chosen out of the said schools; but in case the rents should fall short of what they were then, the election of one or two, or more of the number of scholars before mentioned, designed to be elected out of the two last mentioned free schools, was to be bmitted and cease, until the premises should again come to be of sufficient, yearly value, to maintain the said eighteen scholars, which are to be elected out of the most ingenious and deserving youths, and of least ability to maintain themselves. The electors are the dean of Christ church, or his deputy, and the justices of the peace inhabiting, or acting within the hundreds of Bradford, Stolisden and Brimstree for the time being, or any three of them, whereof the dean of Christ church, or his delegate is to be one.

After the death of Andrew Charlton, esq. who was the last that had his life in Carswel's estate; the heir at law sued for it, but by decree of chancery, the charity was established; and July 6th, 1741, an order was made that the masters of the said free

An Account of Wem School.

schools should propose a scheme for carrying into execution the charity created by the said will. November 28th, in the same year, a writing was drawn up, setting forth, that the rents and profits of the premises have been some years past, and now are no more than £312. 14s. 6d. (among the lands settled by Mr. Carswel for these uses, there was a tenement of above £60. a year, which he had purchased of a person who had not legal power to sell; and which the heir of that person recovered, after Mr. Carswel's death, by verdict in his favour at Shrewsbury assizes, confirmed by a second hearing at Westminster, by a decree of chancery) which after the deduction of the incidental, and other charges attending the said estates, it is apprehended will not maintain above ten scholars at one time in such manner, and proportion; and proposing, that the said ten scholars be thus elected, three out of Shrewsbury school, two out of Bridgenorth, three out of Newport, and two out of Shiffnal school. This writing was signed by Samuel Lea, schoolmaster of Newport, Hugh Stackhouse, schoolmaster of Bridgenorth, Edward Fosbrooke, schoolmaster of Idssal, otherwise Shiffnal, and Seth Shepherd, curate of Bobbington, and the scheme therein proposed, I believe, was confirmed by the court of chancery. And yet it is plain, that the estate at the low value here set upon it would maintain twelve scholars; (the income of the bequeathed estate one year with

The first Feoffees of Wem School, chosen by the Founder.

another, amounts to not more than £290.) and for that reason I suppose Mr. Hodgkis, schoolmaster of Shrewsbury, refused to sign the writing above mentioned.

THE FIRST FEOFFEES OF WEM SCHOOL, CHOSEN BY THE FOUNDER.

Rowland Hill, of Soulton, esq. buried at Wem, November 7th, 1667,

Edward Astley, of Aston, gentleman, buried at Wem, December 10th, 1675.

Mr. Thomas Barnes, the elder, of the Lowe, buried at Wem July 13th, 1658.

Mr. Thomas Barnes, the younger, of the Lowe, buried at Wem, June 2nd, 1668.

Mr. Richard Jebb, of Wem, steward, buried at Newtown, March 9th, 1695.

Mr. Thomas Jebb, of Wem, mercer, buried at Wem, January 18th, 1698.

Mr. John Adams, of the Woodhouse, buried at Wem, January 11th, 1662.

Mr. Samuel Smith, of Wem, mercer, a bankrupt, in 1676.

Mr. Thomas Lovekin, of Tilley, buried at Wem, November 3rd, 1661.

. Mr. Richard Higginson, of Wem.

Mr. Richard Menlove, of the Foxholes, buried at Wem. August 1st, 1674.

John Cartwright, of Wem, yeoman, buried at Wem, September 13th, 1668.

John Sherratt, of Wem, butcher, buried at Wem, October 30th, 1685.

Mr. Robert Wilkinson, of Wolverley, buried at Newtown, Navember 3rd, 1679.

Mr. Thomas Acherley, of Wolverley, buried at Wem, February 24th, 1657.

THE STATUTES OF THE FREE. SCHOOL AT WEM.

The orders and statutes prescribed, appointed, agreed, and concluded by the worshipful Thomas Adams, esq. late lord mayor of the city of London, and alderman, founder, and others the benefactors of the free school, in Wem, in the county of Salop, to be by the trustees, governors, and feoffees, and schoolmasters kept, and observed for ever, for the due ordering, and governing of the said school, March 4th, 1650.

T is ordered, and concluded, that the persons hereinaster named, that is to say, Rowland Hill, esq. Edward Astley, Thomas Barnes, the elder. Thomas Barnes, the younger, Richard Jebb, Thomas Jebb, John Adams, Samuel Smith, Thomas Lovekin, Richard Higginson, Richard Menlove, John Cartwright, John Sherrat, Robert Wilkinson, and Thos. Acherley, inhabitants within the parish of Wem aforesaid, being the full number of fifteen shall be enfeoffed of the lands, profits, and hereditiments. appertaining to the free schools, to them, their heirs, and assigns, upon trust and confidence, and to the intent, that they, their heirs, and assigns shall duly, and truly employ the issues and profits of the said lands, and premises, to and for the use of the said school, and encouragement of the masters thereof, and also perform these statutes, and articles following, which statutes, and articles are by the said founder, declared and committed unto the said trustees, willing and requiring, and with their mutual assent, charging them, their heirs, and assigns, who shall succeed them in the said trust from henceforth for ever hereafter, duly, truly, and effectually, to execute, perform, fulfil, and observe the same in every branch, clause, sentence, and meaning to the best of their skill and understanding, as they, and every of them shall answer, and yield an account at the day of judgement before almighty God, when he shall, and will with justice and equity, reward,

or punish the observance, or breach of such godly confidence and trust, with joy and pain, as the case shall require.

It is concluded, and agreed by the authority aforesaid, that the said free school at Wem shall be free for all men's children within the parish of Wem aforesaid, except of those parents, and their heirs, who being of ability, have not contributed towards the advancement of the said school; and except those persons and their heirs, who have promised any sum, or sums of money towards raising of a competent and comfortable maintainance for the masters of the said school, and do not pay in their promised, or subscribed sums at, or before the 26th day of March next, which shall be in the year 1651, to Mr. Samuel Smith, or Mr. Thomas Jebb, treasurers appointed for that purpose.

For the better knowledge of benefactors to the said school, and for the exciting of others to follow their laudable example in so pious a work, it is concluded that the names of all benefactors, with their several sums, places of abode, and titles, shall together, with these statutes, be fairly written, and set, or hanged up in a large frame in the said school, there to continue for ever, and for the better preservation, and observation of these things, it is farther agreed, that the benefactors' names, sums,

titles, and places of abode, together with the statutes and other writings concerning the said school, shall be ingrossed in a fair large paper book, to be kept by the ministers and church wardens of the parish of Wem, together with the trustees and head masters of the said school, in the church of Wem, or any other place within the parish by them agreed upon; provided it be a chest or coffer, with four keys, to be kept one by the minister, one by the church wardens, one by the said master of the said school, and another by the trustees, which book is to be delivered by the person entrusted, at any meeting in the parish, if thereunto lawfully required.

The parent, or friend bringing any child to be admitted to the said school, shall present the said scholar to the master, and pay for his admission, ls. 6d. at least, out of which, the head master shall give 6d. to the master of that school, into which the scholar is to be entered. And at the time of the admission, these statutes are to be read, or the sum thereof declared to the child's parent, or friend, that he, or they may promise his, or their care, so much as in him, or them lieth, for the observing thereof, and without such a promise, none shall be admitted.

The scholars that live within the town of Wem, and the under schoolmasters shall repair to school from the 25th March, to 29th September, by six

of the clock in the morning; those in the several villages remote from the town, by seven at the farthest, at which time the head master shall also be there. From the 29th of September, to the 26th of March, those in the town of Wem, and the under masters shall be in school by seven o'clock, those in the villages, by eight, at which time the head master shall likewise be present. Their departure to dinner shall be at eleven, their return at one; and their departure in the afternoon shall be at five, unless the master shall think fit to permit those that come from the farthest villages, to depart sooner, because of the darkness of the season. The bell shall be rung both morning and afternoon, for them that reside in the town, to come to school.

For due observation of the schoolmasters in school time, they shall not be absent from their charge, if they be in health, the head master not above twenty days in one year, the under schoolmaster not above fifteen days in one year, at one, or several times without the consent of the trustees, or the greater part of them. Provided always that there be but one absent at a time. And if any urgent occasion, or cause, as sickness, shall inforce them to be absent, they shall cause their places to be supplied by sufficient deputies in their respective absences.

The head masters may grant the scholars leave to play one day in a fortnight, that is to say, twenty-six whole days in the year; provided the masters do not let them play two whole days in one week. If any parishioner shall obtain leave of the master for the scholars to play, he shall give the master for the benefit of the school, 1s. and if a foreigner, 2s. The master is to give an account of the play-days, and the obtainers of them to the treasurer, which treasurer is to be one of the feoffees; and is to be elected at Easter, and to continue for one year, and then to give an account of his receipts and disbursements, unto the others of the feoffees, or the major part of them.

The school shall break up a week before the nativity of Christ, and on the Wednesday before Easter, and Whitsuntide; and the scholars are to return to school the 7th of January, unless it be on a Friday, or Saturday, and if it be then on the Monday following, and on the Monday after Easter and Whitsun-week.

Every morning at the repairing to school, prayer shall be used, and some part of the canonical scripture read, and in the evening in like-manner; and a psalm sung whenever the master shall think fit. And every scholar shall have a bible, that all may receive benefit by these christian exercises.

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The master shall one day in every week, catechise the scholars in the principles of the christian religion. The day is to be referred to the master's discretion.

For the keeping of the school, and the entrance thereof sweet and clean, every scholar shall pay a penny per quarter, to the master, who shall appoint one to see it done accordingly.

The number of forms in the whole school under the chief and second masters, shall be six or seven at the most. And the scholars shall be instructed in such authors, and perform such exercises, as the masters, with the advice of the visitors; shall judge convenient for every form.

The under masters shall observe the directions of the head master in the teaching of the scholars under them, and for the good government of the school.

The school masters shall especially be careful of the demeanor and behaviour of the scholars, to prevent, and suppress all swearing, cursing, and taking the name of God in vain, sabbath breaking, stealing, lying, filthy talking, gaming, tipling, drunkenness, quarrelling, and any other vice whatsoever; and once weekly shall keep general corrections, for the punishing of those that offend, in these, or any other offences appertaining to scholars.

If any scholar shall stubbornly refuse to submit himself to his master's obedience in these statutes, or any other which the master shall appoint, for the better disciplining of the school, and scholars, to the advancement of learning, and religion, or shall prove so corrupt in manners, that his example shall become hurtful, he shall be expelled from this school, and without manifest appearance of amendment and repentance, be never thereunto again admitted. If any scholar shall remove from this school to another, or absent himself from school without the master's leave first obtained, the space of fourteen days, except in case of sickness, the parent of such scholar shall pay for his re-admission, one shilling at least.

Whereas many inhabitants of ability within this parish are backward, and unwilling to contribute to this so good a work; and many not of ability at present to promote the same, yet in process of time, they, or their heirs may be found able and willing to advance the said school; and whereas many hereafter may come into the said parish, of ability; it is desired that such persons may be invited to contribute to so good a work, for which purpose, the chief master and the trustees shall admit of the same in love, and of such sum, or sums of money, as in discretion shall be thought fit according to their respective abilities, which sum, or sums of money.

inhabit out of the parish, when their number shall be less than nine survivors, and inhabiting in the said parish, the remaining part of them, or the major thereof, within one month after the death, or removal of such feoffee, or feoffees as aforesaid, shall elect, and choose some other substantial honest man, or men inhabiting within the parish; so that the full number of nine may be continued feoffees, or trustees, for the more effectual transacting the work of the said school, which is at all times to be managed by the major part of the feoffees, and at no time by less than five being the major part of the said nine, and the charge in the preamble is to be always read to the newly elected, who must promise with his, or their best endeavour to perform it, as is there expressed.

For a constant supply of schoolmasters in case of death, or voluntary departure, or removal for any of the causes before expressed, the feoffees, or visitors, or the major part of them shall within three months next after such death, removal, or voluntary departure, elect, and choose, with the consent of the founder, if he be then living, another schoolmaster qualified, and fitted for that employment. And in case the visitors, and feoffees, and their successors, or the major part of them do not appoint a schoolmaster within the aforesaid time, and space of three months next after the decease, departure, or removal

of such schoolmaster as aforesaid, that then the minister of Wem, and the church-wardens, or the major part of them shall present, and commend a schoolmaster unto the founder and his heirs, who are first to approve of him, and so he is to be admitted according to, and under the rules, and provisors before prescribed.

That these things may be better for ever be observed to the glory of God, by the increase of godly learning, and virtuous behaviour, the school once every year at the least shall be visited, (viz.) the Tuesday before Ascension day, which is in the fourth week after Easter week, by the present parsons and ministers of Wem, Whitchurch, and Hodnet, and their respective successors, or two of them at least, together with the feoffees, and the successors, or the greatest part of them, who shall observe how the scholars profit, and what the masters and usher have done in keeping these orders. To which visitors, liberty is given to explain these statutes in any doubt that shall arise about them.

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Thomas Adams.

THE CHIEF MASTERS OF WEM-SCHOOL.

RICHARD RODERICK born at Oswestry, in the county of Salop. He was in orders, but did not accept of any preferment in the church. He taught in a large room over the old markethouse till August 1665, when Daniel Wycherley, gentleman, having purchased the barony, and manor of Wem, would not suffer him to teach there any longer. This obliged him and the other masters to remove to the church; but the church being inconvenient, as well as too sacred for such a use, on the 20th of January, 1668, the feoffees agreed to build a school, as had been intended from the beginning. Their design was not carried into execution before the year 1670, when the present school was erected. Mr. Roderick had the pleasure to be the first chief master that taught in it. Under him the school flourished exceedingly. Great numbers of young gentlemen were committed to his care. Richard, earl of Bradford told me, that he had been his scholar. And how much he improved his scholars appears from his two sons, Richard and Charles, who were men of great learning, and obtained considerable preferments in the church. He was particularly remarkable for the strict discipline he kept, and the dread his scholars were under, of incurring his dis-

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pleasure. A messuage, and lands in Northwood, in the parish of Wem, were purchased by him, which, in 1466 he sold again, for £240. By some accident unknown, he had the misfortune to hurt one of his feet, which occasioned a little lameness, and his being called Club-foot Roderick. After he had taught upwards of twenty-three years, he died at Wem, and was buried there April 5th, 1674, as Ann his wife had been July 1671.

CHARLES RODERICK, his youngest son was clected 1674. He was a considerable benefactor to the school, to which, he gave £20. At this time he was in holy orders, and probably Fellow of King's college, in Cambridge; whither he returned upon a difference that arose between him and the feoffees, because he neglected, or refused to pay to the treasurer the money due for play-days. They ejected him by virtue of his resignation bond; and this event which might have ruined another, proved the making of his fortune. For applying himself to his studies, in 1689 he commenced doctor in divinity; and acquired so much favour in his college, as to be chosen their provost; and so much interest at court, as to be collated to the deanery of Ely. in great credit and splendour, and died in 1712, leaving two or three children by a young woman; whom he married in the sixty-third year of his age.

ROBERT ROE, gentleman, was born at Arleston, near Wellington, in Shropshire, where his father had been a noted schoolmaster. In his time March 3rd, 1677, the great fire happened, which consumed his dwelling house, the birth place of the founder, and reduced him to the necessity of living with his family in the upper story of the school, where the present library was his bed-chamber, and the other room was his kitchen, the chimney there being run up at his expense. He rebuilt that part of the schoolhouse, which is brick; and in 1679, purchased the new pool meadow. He was a man of large stature, but of mean capacity; so that he did neither shine in conversation, nor was able to keep up the reputation of the school. His heavy genius, and the loss of his scholars exposing him to affronts, he thought fit to relinquish a post which he could not keep with honour. He retired to Arleston, and not long after purchased the lordship of Hadley, near Wellington, where he taught a private school in the manor house, and sent his two sons to the university of Cambridge.

FRANCIS WILLIAMS, born at Lilleshil, in the county of Salop, was elected about 1682. He was educated at Newport school, of which he was afterwards chosen under master. When he settled at Wem, he obtained the curacy of Newtown, in that parish, worth £42. per annum, and with it, in process

of time, the vicarage of Wednesbury, in Staffordshire. This last he resigned in 1706, upon his being presented to the vicarage of Great Nesse, in the county of Salop. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Mr. Thorp, of Wem, timber-merchant, and with her he lived in a house of steward Jebb, near the long Stone, till his was finished, To his address, and importunity in procuring money and materials, is entirely owing the larger, and better part of the school-house, being the timber building. He was a jolly personable man, had a pleasant way of discourse, and brought up a great number of scholars. them upon acting plays, not only in the latin, but also in the greek language. I saw them perform in a handsome manner, and before a great audience, the Plutus of Aristophanes. His unlawful amours were expensive to him; but managed with so much secresy, as to bring no scandal upon his profession. He was often afflicted with the gout, the effect of his intemperance; and more often with the want of money, the effect of his ill conduct. August 17th, 1710, he died at Wem, leaving a widow, one son, and many daughters.

PETER EDWARDS, born at Smethcot, in the parish of Wroxeter, and county of Salop, was elected September 26th, 1710. He was educated at Donnington school, in the said parish, and in Christ church, Oxford, where he took both degrees in arts,

and then removed to Edmund Hall. He was my cousin german, travelled with me to Oxford, when I was admitted there, and was one of the three masters that examined me for my degree. Before he left. the University, he was preceptor to a gentleman's son in Buckinghamshire; and when he came from Oxford, he assisted the chief master of Wolverhampton school. Mr. Husbands gave him a presentation to the rectory of Stoke, in the county of Salop, on condition of marrying his daughter; but then only in deacon's orders, he lost this advantage, because bishop Hough refused him a private ordination, and the living would lapse before there could be a public After he had been some years at Wem, he got the rectory of Moreton Corbet, which he resigned as soon as Mr. Vincent Corbet, the son of his patron was qualified for it. From this living, and the school, he acquired so much money, as to leave an estate of £50. per annum for three lives under Henry, earl of Bradford. Whilst he was rector of Moreton, be preached a visitation sermon at Shrewsbury, before bishop Hough. Another sermon of his preached at Wem, was remarkable only on account of the text, " Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of leve," Solomon's song, ch. 2. v. 5. In his time the school fleurished exceedingly, and great numbers of young gentlemen were bred up under him. He was politick, discreet, well bred, and had a majestic presence, being a big

and comely man. He took great pains in the school, but in the latter part of his:time; especially in the summer, his fitness:disposed him to be sleepy. In 1724, upon the decay of his health, and some little hickerings with the feodices, he resigned the school, and with a few of his acholars, retired to his nativity. At his father's death, which happened not long after; he succeeded him in a good estate at Smethcot. September 21st, 1729, he died of a relaxed state of body, brought on by the medicines which he took to relieve him from a feverish disorder.

THOMAS HUGHES, born at Pont-fary, in the county of Flint, was elected April 20th, 1724. had his education at Kythin school, in the county of Denbigh, and in Jesus' college, Oxford, where he took the degree of master of arts, but never entered into hely orders. He had a flourishing school at Whitchurch; but offering some insult, or affront to the rector of that place, then bishop of Hereford, and having been concerned in engaging a man to proclaim the Pretender, the bishop commenced a suit in chancery against him, and obtained a decree, for ejecting him from Whitchurch, and after his election to Wem, represented him as a jacobite to doctor Chandler, bishop of this diocese, Who thereupon refused to grant him a licence. Being not able to get over this difficulty, he accepted of the school at Hanmer, where he died a few years

after. Though he had the profits of Wem school for six menths, yet he taught here but part of one afternoon, having deputed his usher Baduly to supply his absence. He was a strong well-made man, had the character of a good, but severe master; keeping a strict discipline, though he was a little whimsical in the management of it,

JOHN APPLETON, born at Holt, in the county of Denbigh, was elected November 30th, 1724. He had his school learning under Mr. Thomas Hughes, at Wrexham, in the same county, and his academical instruction in Cambridge, under Mr. Robert Lambert, fellow of St. John's college, afterwards master of it. He followed his studies diligently, but his circumstances would not permit him to take a degree. He first taught school at Hanmer, and from thence removed to Wrexham, where he had a great number of scholars. Ten, or more young gentlemencame with him to Wem, and this school flourished under him a considerable time; but I do not know by what fatality it was at length reduced to so low an ebb, that in 1734, he had but three scholass. By degrees the number increased, and the school continued in good credit till his death. He delighted much in riding, and never thought himself more happy than when he was on horseback. been many years curate at Tilstock, to doctor Egerton, bishop of Hereford, who at last promised:

to prefer him, but was prevented by death. made a deep impression on Mr. Appleton. A misunderstanding with Mr. Blaney, curate of Whitchurch, whom he was obliged to assist every sacrament day, gave him so much uneasiness, that he threw up his curacy of Tilstock, though it was £40. per annum. An asthma seemed to threaten him, but he imagined he had an infallible remedy, in cider, and apples. The gout often laid him up, but he conceived, that it might be prevented, by bathing his legs in cold water, An unhappy experiment of this kind occasioned a pleuretick fever, of which he died May 3rd, He was a middle sized man, strong, and active, till be contracted a lameness. In company he was facetious, and merry, and would tell abundance of pleasant stories. In the pulpit he was a boanerges, in respect to the loudness of his voice. and the earnestness and the vehemence of his delivery. His preaching was long admired at Whitchurch, till it was eclipsed by Mr. Talbot's. town desired him for their schoolmaster, but he declined the offer, because the full revenues of their school were not then recovered. He was the first that taught hebrew at Wem, and seemed to take more pleasure, and pains in teaching it, than either latin, or greek. He was well skilled in most parts of the mathematicks, particularly in arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and the doctrine of the globes. By Eleanor, daughter of Alexander Pulford, of

Wrexham, gentleman, he had one son, now a clergyman.

STEPHEN PRYTHERCH, a Cambro-Briton, suceceded Mr. Appleton, His father teaches school at Rughen, in Deubighshire, where his son was born Having in this place imbibed the first rudiments of learning, he was sent to Wrexham school, and thence to Jesus' college, in Onford, where he took the degree of master of arts. His first preferment was the mastership of Wrenham school, and a oursev under Mr. Jones, rector of Rusbon, who introduced him into acquaintance of sir Watkin Williams Wynn. This gentleman was so well pleased with him, that he made a promise of the next presentation to the vicarage of Great Wenlock, in the county of Salop. but unfortunately he died by a fall from his horse as he was hunting, before the vacancy happened. However his lady falfilled his promise, and Mr. Prytherch was inducted to that living in 1752. Soon after, he married Mrs. Chambre, a considerable fortune, and at Michaelmas, 1755, removed with her to Wenlock, He is an agreeable, and well-accomplished man, rends distinctly, sings admirably, and so is an agrees ble companion, as well as a good scholar.

The second Masters of Wem School.

THE SECOND MASTERS OF WEM SCHOOL.

PEARCE RODERIC, born at, or near Oswestry, was the first master of the second school. He was elected in 1650, by the interest, and on the recommendation of his brother Richard, the chief master, whom he survived eight years. He was an innholder, and probably, suffered much by the great fire in 1677. After this misfortune, he built, at great expense, a large house, now known by the sign of the Red Lion. He had two wives, Jane and Margaret. Jane died in 1666, and Margaret in 1675. By the first he had a son in 1653, by the other a son in 1669. He himself died April 27th, 1682.

THOMAS WOTTON, born at Adney, in the parish of Edgmond, and county of Salop, was elected in 1682. He was instructed in grammar learning, at Newport school, in the said county, and from thence sent to the university of Cambridge. As he stayed but a short time at Wem, he left nothing memorable behind him, only it is said, that he went from hence to London, was sometime lecturer of Islington, in the county of Middlesex, and afterwards curate of St. Lawrence, Jury.

JOHN COLLIER, born at Brescot, in the parish of Gnosal, in the county of Stafford, was elected

The second Masters of Wem School.

September 19th, 1687. He had his education at Newport school, in the county of Salop, and in Sidney college, Cambridge, where he commenced master of arts. The curacy of Edstaston, in the parish of Wem, was a great addition to the profits of the school. He purchased a good house, with a large garden in an alley, which lies between the Noble and High-street. In 1710, he succeeded Mr. Williams in the vicarage of Great Nesse, and in 1712, he resigned the school which he had so much neglected, that the feoffees designed to eject him. afterwards procured the rectory of Petton, enjoyed it a considerable time, and was buried at Wem, April 25th, 1732. By his wife Margaret, the widow of Mr. John Hayward, of the Woodhouse, he had three daughters. Mr. Collier was of a middle stature, and sanguine complexion, his face being a little enflamed by drinking. He was not eminent as a scholar, or a divine, but was well respected as a sportsman, and a good companion. On this account, he was much in favour with Mr. Hill, of Soulton, and Mr. Sandford, of Twembloes. was very busy at elections of knights of the shire, and on this score, he was in the good graces of Henry, lord Newport, by whose interest he got the presentation to Great Nesse.

SAMUEL GARBET, born at Norton, in the parish of Wroxeter, in the county of Salop, was

The second Masters of Wem School.

elected March 11th, 1712. He was sent from Donnington school to Oxford whilst he was very young, and June 12th, 1700, he was entered of Christ Mr, William Adams, editor of Cornelius-Nepos, and author of a volume of sermons, was his May 23rd, 1704, he took the degree of batchelor of arts; September 22nd, 1706, was ordained deacon, and soon after licensed to the curacy of Great Nesse. July 5th, 1707, he proceeded master The relation he bore to, and the acquaintance he had with Mr. Peter Edwards, induced him to accept of the school. In 1713, Richard, earl of Bradford, and Henry, lord Newport recommended him to doctor Chandler, for the curacy of Edstaston, which the doctor was inclined to give him out of his own good will, and affection for him. May 16th, 1714, he married Anna, daughter of John Edwards, of Great Nesse, gentleman, and next year published a literal translation of the two first books of Phedrus, for the use of his scholars. In 1724, when Mr. Peter Edwards resigned the chief school, all the feoffees came to his house, and offered the place to him, which he refused to accept, for several reasons. Having for thirty years kept up the credit of the school, and being in easy circumstances, he thought fit to retire from that toilsome employment, and at his leisure hours to compile these memoirs, for the information of posterity.

RALPH EDDOWS, born at Terrick-hall, near Whitchurch, in the county of Salop, was elected March 20th, 1742.

THE THIRD MASTERS OF WEM SCHOOL.

THOMAS DICKIN was elected in 1650, and taught till the great fire in 1677, and sometime after. But then abandoning himself to drunkenness, he was dismissed from the school, and died very poor, being buried at Wem, December 29th, 1687.

CARTWRIGHT, curate first of Newtown, afterwards of Edstaston. He was a mean preacher, and yet not despised. One of his scholars remembers that he was an old thick broad-set man.

THOMAS MOOR, a dissenter from the established church. He had been a glover, but having quitted his trade, he taught a petty school in the Noble-street. After his election, he brought his scholars into the free school, where having taught about five years, he died of the palsy, and was buried at Wem, April 5th, 1690.

JOHN ADAMS, son of Richard Adams, of Northwood, yeoman, a relation of the founder, was elected

1690. He had been brought up to the law in the city of Loudon, but not meeting with encouragement as an attorney, he undertook the harder province of a schoolmaster. He was a comely, jolly, genteel man; soon cut off by death; for he was buried at Wem, June 19th, 1694.

SAMUEL BARNES, a native of Wem, was elected September 18th, 1694. He had once a good estate, but being by misfortunes reduced, he accepted of this employment, and five years after was chosen parish clerk of Wem, in the room of Thomas Smith, who was forced to fly upon a charge of sacrilege. Samuel Barnes died in the sixty-first year of his age, and was buried at Wem, December 24th, 1701.

JOSEPH HIGGINSON, born at Wem, and educated in the free school there, was elected in 1702. Having acquired a great command of his pen, he taught to write, as well as to read, but falling into a consumption, he died in the twenty-fourth year of his age, and was buried at Wem, June 19th, 1706.

THOMAS JONES was elected March 14th, 1707. Besides his proper business, he taught writing and arithmetic, but having disobliged Mr. Williams, he was dismissed by the feoffees, July 4th, 1710. There was a vacancy for near two years, in order with the salary of the third master, to discharge a debt contracted by building the chief master's house.

The dissenting Ministers at Wem.

JOHN BARNES, born at Wem, son of Samuel Barnes above mentioned, was elected April 14th, 1712. He served an apprenticeship to a shoemaker, but left off that trade upon his being chosen parish clerk at the death of his father. He was a sensible, genteel, comely man; admired as a clerk; and would have been so as a master, if too many avocations had not diverted him from his business. He kept a public house, married a Yorkshire woman, by whom he had several children, and died of a fever on the 17th of July, 1744.

THE DISSENTING MINISTERS AT WEM.

teachers, it will be proper to observe the provision that is made for them. At first they subsisted entirely on the voluntary contributions of the people. After sometime they got £5. per annum, out of a fund at London, which is still continued to them. In 1697, they had an augmentation of £4. per annum, charged on messuages and lands, left to charitable uses, by Robert Hill, of Wem, glover. In 1747, a neat, and convenient house, worth £5. a year, was

The dissenting Ministers at Wem.

bought for the use of the minister, with money collected among the brethren. And one Stannage, of Wem, tailor, has left the yearly interest of £16. to the minister, after the decease of an aged woman, whom he designed to marry. Upon this view, it appears, that the income of the dissenting teacher is not very considerable at present, but that it is still encreasing.

SAMUEL TAYLOR was the first minister of a separate congregation at Wem. He had been chaplain, or curate of Edstaston, but was ejected thence by the act of uniformity on Bartholomew's day. in 1662. After which, as the times gave liberty, he preached privately at Wem; always ordering so, as that they might not interfere with the public assemblies at church, which both he and his audience constantly attended. At the dreadful fire in 1677, he shared in the common calamity, by having his house burnt, and one circumstance was peculiar to him, that in the confusion of this miserable night, his wife was delivered of a child. His death happened at Wem, June 26th, 1695, and Mr. Philip Henry preached his funeral sermon. He was a clean, nice, little, slender man.

RICHARD LATHAME, a native of Cheshire, succeeded him. In his time the dissenters provoked by the continual invectives of the curate,

The dissenting Ministers at Wem

Mr. Hughes forsook the church; and taking advantage of the act of indulgence, or toleration, purchased a barn in Leek lane, and fitted it up for a meeting-house, where Mr. Lathame officiated till his death in 1706. He was succeeded by

RICHARD LATHROP, born at West-Felton, in Shropshire, and educated at Sheriff-Hales, under Mr. Woodhouse. He was not ordained presbyter, and so according to their discipline, could neither administer the sacrament of baptism, nor the Lord's supper. Being disgusted at the application of some money to the poor, which he thought belonged to him, he resigned in 1708; and was succeeded by

THOMAS FISHER, a gay young man, born at Manchester, in the county of Lancaster. He continued at Wem till 1711, when he removed to Castle Henningham, in Suffolk, and was succeeded here by his predecessor,

RICHARD LATHROP, distinguished by his civilty and moderation. In his time in the year 1715, the meeting-house was pulled down, and burnt by the mob. After this riot, he preached in private houses, till the new meeting-house was erected in 1716, when upon some fresh uneasiness, he removed to Ledbury, in Herefordshire.

The dissenting Ministers at Ween.

THOMAS HOLLAND was the next minister: He was born at Mobberly, in Cheshire, and educated at Manchester, under Mr. James Cunningham. He and his elder brother, who inherits the estate of the family, were twins. He married Mrs. Mary Savage, grand-daughter of Philip, and niece of Matthew Henry, of the Broad Oak. His own and wife's fortune were laid out in the purchase of an estate in Cheshire, of about £20. per annum. As to his person, his stature was large, constitution strong, complexion a little swarthy. The dissenters esteemed him as a good man, but did not admire him as a preacher. The churchmen disliked nothing in him, but his separation. For he was a sensible good natured man, pleasant, and facetious in conversation. He died of a dropsy September 26th, 1753, in his grand climacteric, the sixty-third year of his The disorder of his body took its rise from, at least, was much increased by the apostacy, and wavering of his congregation; some of which, shamefully deserted to the Antinomians, and others too visibly favoured them.

PHILIP HOLLAND, eldest son of Thomas, succeeded his father in 1754. He was born at Wem, and brought up in the free school of that town, under the care of Mr. Appleton. His education was finished at Northampton, at the academy of the famous doctor Doddridge. For some years he was

employed as an assistant at a school, and a meeting-house at Wolverhampton. On his father's death he was invited to Wem, where he was ordained in 1754. For this unreasonable custom prevails among the presbyterians, of letting young men preach, before they are admitted to orders. Towards the end of the next year he removed to Bolton, in Lancashire.

THE STATE OF WEM DURING THE CIVIL WAR.

very few disaffected persons in Shropshire, that good county, as lord Clarendon calls it, where the king had been so prosperous in forming the army with which he fought the battle of Edge-Hill. The high sheriff, the justices of the peace, and the populace were in general well-inclined to his service; and they that most opposed it, retired to Bristol, or other places. The most considerable of the parliament party were Mr. Mytton, Mr. Mackworth, and Mr. Thomas Hunt, member of parliament for the town of Shrewsbury.

After the taking of Bristol, July 26th, 1643, the gentlemen above mentioned, attended by Mr.

Richard Baxter, the famous dissenting minister, having got a small body of troops about the latter end of August, settled a garrison at Wem, being the first which the parliament had in this county. fortify the town, a rampart, or wall of earth was thrown up; which began at Drayton gate, a little beyond Robert James's house, (which house was built for a sentry) and ran along the side of Sandland's vard, and about four-score yards into Cordwall, where it formed an angle, defended by a wooden tower; then it turned towards the mill. crossing Mr. Whitfield's meadow, (Forgham's yards) and the road just below Oliver's well, and passed along the side of the parsonage garden, adjoining to Buggen's lane, till it came to Shrewsbury gate. It then crossed the middle of the larger alleys, the upper part of the little alleys, and Hill's meadow, to the corner of the school garden, whence it turned through the tan-pits on the east side the brook to Ellesmere gate. Thence it extended along the Noble-street garden, to two houses then in the fields, where a guard was kept, and from those houses continued to Whitchurch gate, opposite to Pidgeon's barn, thence being carried on in a straight line for forty or fifty yards, it crossed over Shenton's field, to Tyler's garden, ran along the side and the upper end thereof, and then through Morris's garden came up to Drayton gate. Mr. Baxter says that the ditch was little bigger than such as husbandmen enclose

their ground with. But from the remains of it in Cordwall, it appears to have been four yards wide, and of a proportionable depth, perhaps it was narrower where the land could be flooded, for the low grounds were laid under water from Woodhouse's croft to Cordwall. The ditch may still be traced in Cordwall, the fields called the Hill's meadow, and Shenton's fields. The earth thrown out of the foss, or ditch made the wall, or rampart, which was strengthened by palisades placed so thick, that a whole coppice in the township of Lacon was cut down for this purpose. All houses and buildings without the wall were burnt, to prevent their giving shelter to an enemy.

1643. In the summer as soon as the king had notice of a garrison placed at Wem, he sent the lord Capel a person of great fortune, and honour, to Shrewsbury, with a commission of lieutenant-general of Shropshire, Cheshire, and North Wales. Probably to oppose him, the parliament sent from London sir William Buerton, a gentleman of competent fortune in Cheshire, and in that parliament one of the knights for that county. He brought with him a troop of horse, and a regiment of foot, and had orders to raise the train bands, and to fortify Nantwich. When lord Capel had got nearly five thousand men, he resolved to attack Wem before it's works were quite finished. At the same time sir William Buerton

with his Cheshire forces, drew near the town to support and defend it. The two armies lay within a mile of each other, two or three days, and light skirmishes had happened between small parties, when the lord Capel made use of a stratagem to draw. off the Cheshire men. He marched into their quarters, and plundered all the villages about Nantwich, and then under the cover of the night returned back another way. Sir William Buerton with his own men, and almost all the garrison of Wem hastened to relieve Nantwich, but by the time they came thither, the lord Capel was before Wem. Both the wall and the gates were unfinished. The gates had no hinges, being only reared up, and there were but few soldiers left in the town under the command of colonel Hunt, An express was immediately dispatched to sir William Baerton, who finding himself outwitted by lord. Capel, would have persuaded his men to march back immediately to preserve Wem, but they being tired with their march home that evening, and vexed at the ravage that had been made in their absence, could not be prevailed on to follow the enemy. So Wem was given up as lost, but about three or four o'clock in the morning their minds changed, and then they would go to Wem, but they moved so slowly, and halted by the way, that lord Capel's army had twice stormed the town, and had been as often repulsed before their arrival. Some field pieces fired on the town, but did no execution, only a

cannon ball passed through a hogshead of beer, at the houses in the fields from this accident, called "The Bullet Guard." About eighty men approached the wall on the north side, but fled at the sight of a lighted match, and two rolls of bark which Robert Woodhouse had planted in a tumbrel on the wall, and which he called "A couple of Drakes." The principal attack was made at Drayton gate. Of the parliamentarians, colonel Wyn was slain, and colonel sir Thomas Scriven mortally wounded. The royalists sustained some lost; but we have not the All the time of action lord names of any that fell. Capel sat smoking his pipe about half a mile from Wem, on the Soulton road. Had he boldly led his men on to the attack, and stormed several places at once, he could not have failed of success; there being only forty soldiers, and an undisiplined rabble of men and women to oppose him. The women particularly distinguished themselves, which gave occasion to this rhyme,

> The women of Wem, and a few musketteers Beat the lord Capel, and all his cavaliers.

As the cheshire men approached, the enemy drew off, and secured their retreat over Lee bridge, by seizing that pass, and annoying the army that pursued them from the hedges. The darkness of the night put an end to the engagement. Lord Capel returned to Shrewsbury, and sir William Buerton to Nantwich. 1644. The garrison of Wem seemed

better provided for their defence, when prince Rupert seemed resolved to attack them. The Irish army that besieged Nantwich having been defeated on the 25th of January, his highness was sent from Oxford in the beginning of February, with a great body of chosen horse and dragoons, and some foot, for the security of Shrewsbury, and Chester, and North Wales, all which were terrified with this defeat. The prince made new levies at Shrewsbury, and then marched with his little army towards Chester. Wem lay in his way, and he took a full view of it from the Trench farm, and the bank at the Ditches; but then slighted it, saying, "It was a crow's nest that would not afford each of his men a piece of bread."

February 22nd, or 23rd, 1645, colonel Mytton and colonel Langhorn, two very active officers in the parliament service, with a party of fifteen hundred men being the garrisons of Wem and Oswestry, surprised the town of Shrewsbury. Sir Michael Earnley, the governor thereof, had unhappily two or three days before sent a great number of his soldiers upon some expedition. Of those that remained, several were corrupted by the townsmen, with whom the above mentioned colonels kept a correspondence. So in the night, the water-gate below Saint Mary's church was opened, the guard being in the plot, or made drunk, and a great body of the parliament

forces was let into the town. By the same treachery they entered the castle, where the governor and been long sick, but rising upon the alarm out of his bed, he was killed in his skirt; whilst he behaved himself as well as was possible, and refused quarter; which did not shorten his life many days, he being at the point of death by a consumption; which kept him from performing all those offices of vigilance he was accustomed to, being a gallant gentlemen, who understood the office and duty of a soldier, by long experience, and diligent observation. neward colonel Mytton for his good service on this eccasion, he was advanced to the degree of majorgeneral. In the beginning of May in this year, the king had in the county of Salop, the garrisons of Ludlow, Bridgnorth, Dawley. Shrawarden castle, Cans castle, Moreton Corbet house, Stockley castle, Rowton castle, Lilleshill manor, Appley castle, High Ercal, Carew castle, and Embleden castle. The parliament had Shrewsbury, Wem, and Oswertry. At this time the greatest part of Shropshire was for the king, but after the fatal battle of Naseby, June 14th, he lost ground in almost every part of the Kingdom.

Major-general Mytton was governor of Wem, the garrison whereof took Ercall house belonging to lord Newport; Appley castle belonging to Mr. Charlton; Moreton Corbet house belonging to air Andrew

Corbet; and Shrawarden castle belonging to Mr. Bromley. Moreton Corbet house was set on fire to facilitate the taking of it. Shrawarden castle was surprized while the garrison attended public prayers in the chapel. Great was the plunder brought into Wem, which never flourished more than in these times of confusion.

The Round Heads of Wem was a name of terror. They extended their ravages far, and were very troublesome to the royalists, imprisoning their bodies, and sequestering their estates. Richard Sandland's house in the Noble-street was their prison. They drove doctor Midcalf from the rectory of Wem, John Arnway from that of Hodnet, and James Fleetwood from the vicarage of Prees. They compelled Wm. Allanson of the New-street, in Wem, to compound for his estate, by paying the sum of £80.

THE GREAT FIRE AT WEM, MARCH 3rd, 1677.

seven and eight o'clock, at a small house near the upper end of Leek-lane, which stood on F f

the same ground which Mr. Phillips's brewhouse now stands. It was occasioned by the carelessness of a girl, about fourteen years of age, called, Jane Churm, who went up stairs to fetch some fuel kept under a bed, in order to make a good fire against the return of her sister, Catharine Morris, of the Newstreet, who was washing linen at Oliver's well, The inconsiderate girl whilst she was gathering the sticks together, stuck her candle in a twig that encompassed a spar, when catching the thatch, it set the house in flames; which being agitated by a violent tempestuous wind, soon defied all human means to extinguish them. It was a very dry season, and the houses were covered with straw, or shingles, so that the fire spread into several streets, and with such rapidity seized house after house, that in a short time the conflagration became general. A strong easterly wind blew the burning thatch and shingles to a vast distance, and the devouring flames ran along the High-street, Cripple-street, and the Horse Fair, consuming every edifice, the free school only excepted, as far as Burton's pit, or the house of George Groom, when on a sudden the wind turned to the south-west, and carried the raging fire through the Noble-street as far as the Draw-well house. great number of country people were now come in, who offered to assist Mr. Higginson in carrying out his goods, but he would not suffer any to be removed, being intent on the preservation of his house.

His barns and out-buildings were on fire, and the flames caught the pinnacle, the weather boards, and the shingles of his house, but by the care, and activity of the people in pouring out water, and casting off the shingles, an entire stop was put to the fire on that side, but on the other it ran the full length of the street. In the High-street the fire spread eastwards to the same point on the north side; on the opposite no farther than the same place where it began. In the Mill-street it extended to the Rector's barns; in Leek-lane to the house of William Smith, late of John Hales. The church, the steeple, the market house, and seven score dwelling houses, besides treble the number of out-houses and buildings were burnt. In the space of one hour they were all on fire, and the blaze was so great, that at the distance of eight or nine miles it seemed very near, and gave almost as great a light as the moon in full. In the town was a scene of the greatest confusion, and horror. The wind blustered, the flames roared, women and children shrieked. People ran at the cry of fire, to the place where it began, and at their return found their own dwellings burning. In the streets they were scorched with excessive heat, in the fields they were ready to perish with cold. Some striving to save their houses, with them lost all their goods, others despairing to extinguish the flames, attempted to carry off their most valuable effects, and many lost by thieves what they had

saved from the fire; one man, and several cattle were consumed in the flames. The man was Richard Sherratt, a shoemaker, who lived on that ground where Sarah Jones now does. Having fetched a parcel of shoes out of his shop, he was seen to go under the market house, which is supposed to have fallen on him.

An estimate being taken of the buildings, and the value of the goods consumed by fire, it was computed that the buildings were worth £14,760. 10s. and the household goods £8,916. 13s. 1d. so that the whole loss amounted to about £23,677. 3s. 1d. for which a brief was obtained, dated the 31st of May, 1677.

In the preceding year there had been two fires in Wem. In the beginning of May, 1676, one small house was burnt. In the latter end of September, another fire broke out in the heart of the town, which did little hurt. At that time considerate people looked on these events as warnings to the impenitent, and when their habitations were laid in ashes, thought it was a judgment on them for neglecting repeated calls to reformation.

The Markets and Pairs at Wem.

THE MARKET AND FAIRS AT WEM.

EM has been a market town five homdred and forty-five years, having enjoyed this privilege from the seventh of king John, A. D. 1205. Then Warin Fitz Gerald having obtained the wardship of William Pantulph, pronuned a charter for a weekly market, and annual fair at this town. At first the market was held on a Sunday, as was then commonly done in other places. In 20th Edward I. William le Boteler under age. and in ward of the king, claimed to hold a market here every week, per diem dominicum on the Lord's This continued to 24th Edward III. when Simon Iship, archbishop of Canterbury, by his constitution did forbid the going to market on the Lord's day for the future. Whereupon the market day was changed from Sunday to Thursday. This market does not take off any quantity of corn, but one part of the year is very remarkable for swine. From the beginning of September to Christmas, thirty or forty hogs are sold every market day. Holy Thursday is not a much inferior fair in respect of the concourse of people, and the variety of cattle and goods that are offered to sale. It was formerly much frequented by maids, dressed all in white, and often appearing twenty or thirty in a body; whence it is

The Market and Fairs at Wem.

commonly called Rig-fair. There are three fairs in the year, which are proclaimed with the usual for-The first in course of the year, though the last that was obtained of the crown, is kept on the 25th of April, being the festival of St. Mark. In 1636, Thomas Howard, earl of Arundel and Surry, procured a charter for it, from king Charles I. It lasts only one day, and is chiefly remarkable for great quantities of linen cloth. The most ancient fair is that obtained by Warin Fitz Gerald, 1205, in the reign of king John, to be held on the Eve the day, and the day after the feast of St. Peter and Paul. Their festival was on the 29th of June. which since the reformation has been appropriated to St. Peter, alone. This fair is chiefly remarkable for cows and calves, and barren cattle, designed to be fed. The third fair is on the 11th day of Nov. being the festival of St. Martin, bishop of Tours, who being one of the popish saints, it is probable this fair was granted in the times of popery, but when, and by whose interest I have not been able to learn. It must be since 20th Edward I. for then it was not claimed together with that on the 29th June. It is chiefly remarkable for vast numbers of the best hogs, most of which are bought on the Eve of the fair, and in droves sent to London for victualling the navy.

THE TOWN OF WEM.

HAVE already taken notice of its antiquity, and situation, its flourishing state in the civil war, and its ruin by the great fire. I should be glad if I could give an account of the revolutions it has undergone in the barons' wars, when without doubt it had its share in the calamities of those troublesome times; and in the wars between the houses of York and Lancaster, especially in the reign of Henry VI. when according to a M. S. note in an old history, a large town called Wem was demolished to the ground, with it walls and castle. same time Red castle near Weston, was destroyed. I have reason to believe this was done by the earl of Salisbury, in 1459, after he had defeated, and slain lord Audley, who was possessed of a third part of Red castle, and the estate belonging thereto. Wem influenced by lord Audley, or directed by Ralph, lord Greystock, then baron thereof, might adhere to the king, and provoke the Yorkists to treat it with this severity. However it was not long before it recovered in some measure its former condition, by the encouragement, and bounty of the noble lord last mentioned.

In ancient writings we often read of houses being within, or without the bars, For there were three

bars at the chief entrances of the town, one at the long stone near the pinfold, another below the parsonage house, and a third against the present schoolhouse. So long in the reign of queen Elizabeth in 1688, the town jury was called the homage within the bars, and the country jury, the homage without the bars.

Wem has the benefit of a good air, plenty of the best water, and is noted for its excellent malt liquors. Its extent from east to west is about half a mile, and above a quarter from north to south. The number of the houses is about two hundred and fifty, and inhabitants one thousand, reckoning four to a house. It consists of six streets, and four lanes. The streets are the High-street, Cripple-street, Noble-street, New Cripple-street, Mill-street, and the New-street. The lanes are Leek-lane, the Horse Fair, Maiden-lane, and the Dark lane.

THE CHURCH.

The church is dedicated to the Apostles, Peter and Paul, as Mr. William Mytton found in an ancient deed; but no wakes is kept in memory thereof. The walls appear to be built of different stone, and at different times. The north porch, and the lower part of the walls are made of red Middle stone,

coarsely worked, heing perhaps the remains of the first church erected here in the Saxons' time. The steeple, the upper part of the walls, and most of the buttresses are of white Grinshill stone, and of more regular workmanship, having been probably finished in the beginning of the reign of Edward IV. soon after the demolition of the town by the earl of Salisbury. The vestry was built a little before the great fire, which burnt the roof, then covered with shingles, the pews, the gallery, and all the timber work, damaged the walls, and melted the bells. The arch under the east-side of the steeple, and the west window in the steeple were made in 1667; part of the west end of the church, all the roof, the north windows, the pews, &c. in 1678. Towards defraying this expense, near £200. were given, chiefly by the neighbouring gentlemen, and the inhabitants.

The lord's chancel was rebuilt about the year 1680. The chancels are separated from the body of the church by a partition supported by twelve pilasters of wood. In 1686, the Communion table was inclosed with the present rail and balusters. The foot pace is raised two steps above the rest of the floor; and the wall about it has been lately wainscotted with oak to the height of five feet and a half. The table is covered with a carpet of crimson velvet, edged with gold fringe; and provided with two cushions of crimson velvet, bound with gold

lace. The common prayer books laid on the cushions are bound in Turkey leather, and gilt after a curious manner. These ornaments are owing to the influence of doctor Eyton, the present rector. On the north wall is an hatchment for Thomas Hill, esq. the last of the family at Soulton.

The nave, or the body of the church consists of two isles, supported in the middle by wooden columns. On the partition wall at the upper end of the principal isle, the king's arms are painted. Below are the creed and Lord's prayer. On each side are the ten commandments, on two tables, with the portrait of the head and shoulders of Moses, and Aaron, as standing behind to support them. date of these decorations is 1680. The pulpit is curiously carved, being the gift of William Probin; and on Sundays is covered with a cloth of crimson velvet, with gold fringe, having the letters J. H. S. being the initials of Jesus Hominum Salvator. Jesus the Saviour of Men. together with a cross above, and an emblem of the Trinity below, finely embroidered in the middle of the cloth with threads of gold. The cushion is of the same velvet, with golden fringe and tassels. The velvet hanging for the desk is of a darker red than the pulpit cloth, but of the same sort of fringe. These rich ornaments were got by order of doctor Evton. There are two long, and one cross alley, with pews on each

side: over the chief alley is a handsome branch of brass, the gift of the Rev. Mr. Tyler, or rather of his aunt Walford. There is a gallery on the south side, and another on the west end, where had been the only one that was before the fire. The cavity of the font is so shallow, that it is not practicable to dip infants in it.

The steeple is twenty-three yards high to the top of the battlements. On the west side stands the statue of a man at full length, and as big as the life, with a truncheon in his hand. On the last side is another statue of a woman, with a cross in her left hand, and the model of the church in her right. The first figure I believe represents Ralph, lord Greystock, baron of Wem, who probably was at the charge of building the steeple, and the other may be his lady, who might promote so good a work. Within is a ring of five bells, cast in 1680; and a clock and chimes set up in 1726.

The silver plate belonging to the church is of the largest size. The chalice and pattin were the gift of Gerrard Shelley, and Cicely, his wife; the flagon of Thomas Groom, and Anne, his wife, in 1707. The bason for receiving the oblations of the people, was bought with money given at the sacrament.

Gerrard, and Cicely Shelley lived in the Newstreet. Whilst he was employed as a painter at

Appley castle, near Wellington, he seduced Cicely, sister of William Forester, and third daughter of Francis Forester, of Watling-street, esq. and having married her, lived on the interest of her fortune, amounting to about £100. per annum. He died at Wem, December 5th, 1705, in the fifty-third year of his age.

Thomas Groom, of the High-street, tanner, married Anne Tyler, of Darleston, who for her second husband, married Mr. Walford, of Lee Brockhurst, but had no issue.

THE HIGH-STREET.

The High-street begins at the May-pole, and reaches a little beyond the market house. In the most eastern part the private houses are mean, and ruinous, but between Peter Pidgeon's and the Bar there are some good houses, and formerly there were considerable farms belonging to several of them. Within the Bar there is a great deal of good building, as particularly Mr. Henshaw's house; Mr. Phillips's set to sir Thomas Longueville, baranet; Mr. Dickin's inhahited by Mrs. Chambre; and Mr. Green's held by Joseph Swanwick, mercer. The market house stands on the south side of this street. The great fire consumed the old one, which was

built of timber, and in a different position, one end of it facing the street. In 1677, a slight fabric of boards was set up, which for many years upbraided the town with its low condition. In 1702, the present market house was built with brick, quoined with stone, but it was not finished till 1728. It is a fine structure, thirty feet long, and twenty-five broad, supported towards the street by arches, and columns of free stone. In front there are two arches, two half, and three whole columns, each of one entire stone, about seven feet in length, between the chapiter and pedestal, and four feet three inches and a half in circumference. The lowest floor is paved, but has a border of free stone, and in the middle a flagged walk extending the whole length of it. the south side is a handsome staircase leading to a spacious room above, which has nine windows, and serves for holding court-leets. In the midst of the roof which is covered with tile, there arises a large open cupola, very ornamental to it.

Between the church-yard, and this street there was formerly a court-house, which had three shops under it. This building either decayed before, or perished in the fire. There was another court-house more ancient, which had been granted in the reign of Henry VIII. to Maurice David. Its situation appears to have been opposite to the present market hall, where after the fire Mr. Joseph Smith built a commodious house, now Mr. Green's.

Various is the tenure that prevails in this street. Without the Bar there never were any burgages, all the lands and houses being copyhold, till the Jebbs, Cowpers, and others got their's made free by Onslow and Playters. Within the Bar the major part of the houses are borough-hold, but there are some freehold, and one copyhold.

THE OLD CRIPPLE-STREET.

Cripple-street had probably its name from the use that was made of it by cripples, who chose it for their station when they came to this town a begging on market days, or fairs. At the time of the survey in 1561, it began where the High-street ended, at the house of John Hinton, afterwards of Richard Peat, since of Thomas Chettoe, at present of Mrs. Higgins, now divided into two dwellings. west of them stood a messuage, formerly a burgage, which in the times of popery appertained to the service of the Virgin Mary in the church of Wem, but in 1st Edward VI. was given to the crown. we may conjecture that the blessed Virgin had an altar in the said church, and that the rents of this, and other messuages and lands were applied to the buying of lights and lamps, and perhaps for the maintainance of a priest. After the fire Matthew Evans, mercer, built a large brick house on this

ground, which on the decay of that family, was purchased by Robert Sandland, who made it two dwellings. The next burgage on the turn of the street two hundred years ago belonged to William Watkis; now the southern part of it is the property of Mr. Richard Allinson, bailiff of the manor, to whose candour and humanity I owe several lights, that have enabled me to traverse the dark paths of antiquity.

On the other side of the street was the half burgage of William Cowper, afterwards of Thomas Dean, barber and ale-seller, whose sign was the One of his sons was vicar of Ellesmere, and another a noted innkeeper in the High-street, at the sign of the White Horse. The next house westward before, and after the fire, belonged to William Lawrence Dier. Rowland Lacon, of Kinlet, esq. had several houses on both sides this street. The farm, house at the west end of it, formerly called Lacon's hall, belonged to him; it came afterwards to the Goldisbroughs; to the Cottons, of Aston; and next to Mr. William Wicksteed, ironmonger and grocer, who at some distance from the street built a high tower of brick, for no visible purpose, as it can be of little, or no use; and therefore it is justly called Wicksteed's folly. Of his administrator this estate was purchased by sir Rowland Hill, of Hawkstone. It is freehold.

THE NOBLE-STREET.

Noble-street seems to have been so called from some imposition, or charge upon it, which amounted inst to a noble. It is vulgarly called the Back-street, because it is behind, and as it were at the back of the High-street. At the entrance of it is the school house, belonging to the chief master: where once stood the house which boasted of the birth of sir Thomas Adams, founder of the school. vev in 1561, Rowland Lacon, esq. had several houses here: as also had Thomas Pontsbury, esq. particularly a burgage, which in the the civil war was the town prison for delinquents. sent house passed from the Ryecrofts to the Johnsons, and from them to the Sandlands. burgage eastwards was also the property of the said Pontsbury. Samuel Deakin has lately built a new house on the same ground. John Woodhouse was owner of the adjacent burgage, which continued in his family till my time, when it was sold to Mr. Lowe. He had two more on the other side of the Sambrook hall was then in the holding of street. Humphrey Jebb. It was burnt at the fire, and a mean building set up on the scite of it. Marrigold pulled down, and erected a finer hall in its place than Sambrooke's was. I can give no account of this Sambrooke, but there are lands in Wem that

still go by his name, and the High-fields, and other estates in Edstaston belonged to him. Mr. Walford's is a neat, and pleasant habitation; much augmented. and improved by him. Two hundred years ago, Thomas Trentham, esq. had a burgage here; next to him Arthur Millward, alias Chamber, had two hurgages on the same ground, which since belonged to Robert Hill, glover, and now to Robert Blakeway, barber. The Draw-well, and Mr. Astley's house are the remains of the old town before the The former with a good estate passed from the Cowpers to the Higginsons, from them to Mr. Joseph Smith, who added much to the estate, from him to the The latter at the survey be-Greens, of Stafford. longed to sir Andrew Corbet, afterwards to the Jebbs, now to Mr. Astley.

On the other side the street stands the Presbyterian meeting-house, built in 1716, in Sarah Thornhill's garden, which the dissenters bought, together with the revenue of her houses after her decease. The charge of it was supported by subscriptions among themselves, added to above £60 of the high sheriff of the county, by orders of the lords of the treasury, being the valuation of the meeting house, demolished by the mob. That which they have at present is built with brick, quoined with free stones, and covered with Madely tiles. Close by it their teacher has a convenient mansion, not long since erected H h

by the Reverend George Tyler, who little imagined into whose hands it would fall, and to what use it would be applied after his death.

From the school-house to Thomas Watkins's shop, all the houses on both sides of the street are free-hold, having been formerly parcels of the estate of Rowland Lacon, esq. from thence to the other end of the street near the Pinfold, all are borough-hold, except the Draw-well house, which for many years has been copyhold.

THE NEW CRIPPLE-STREET.

It is a short alley between the High and Noble-steet. How it came to be called Cripple-street when there was another of the same name, is to me unaccountable. But use and customs have a sovereign power. They have stretched the High-street to the school bridge, and transferred the Cripple-street to this once obscure alley. For at the time of the survey in 1561, I do not find that it had any houses in it, or that it was distinguished by any particular name. It was first paved in the memory of man by the Rey. Mr. Collier, who lived here, and took upon him the office of supervisor of the highways, that he might order so necessary a work to be done.

When Mr. Collier resigned the school he sold his house, which is a very good one, with the gardens and out-buildings, to Mr. John Chettoe, of Horton, who thereupon removed to Wem; applied himself to the malting trade, and built a large and most commodious malt house up to his dwelling. But in 1727, a statute of bankruptcy being issued against him, the dwelling house, with all its appurtenances, was sold to John Barnes, of the Lowe, esq.

On the other side of the street are three new houses, the neatest of which was built by Mr. Beetenson, apothecary and surgeon. The whole street is borough-hold.

THE MILL-STREET.

The Mill-street takes its name from the mills at the south-end of it. They belonged to the barons of Wem; and I have seen a charter of Hugo Pantulph, whereby he obliges one of his freehold tenants and his men, that is, all that held under him, to grind at his mill at Wem, and to assist at the carriage of mill stones, and in mending the mill pond. It is probable all his other freehold tenants were bound to the same service. In 1553, 1st Mary: William, lord Dacre granted a lease for twenty-one years, of two water-mills, and one wind-mill, at the yearly

rent of £8. with a proviso, that if the said lord Dacre, or his heirs kept house within the lordship of Wem during that term, then the grains spent in his, or their house were to be toll, or molter free. In 1541, the said mills belonged to the earl of Arundel; but have since been sold, and have passed from the Dolemans to Mr. John Chettoe, and from him to the Jeffreyses.

Opposite to the church yard there was formerly an alms-house, which was reduced to ashes at the great fire. The seite of it belongs to the lord of the manor, being the garden between the buildings of Mr. Wicksteed and Mr. Colley, of Booley. What endowment it had, and what is become of it I cannot find.

The ornament of this street is the parsonage house, about 1716 rebuilt by doctor Chandler at great expense, and in a new taste. The out-buildings, and the gardens have been much enlarged, and improved by doctor Eyton. The situation is a little too near the water. Doctor Chandler once intended to remove this inconvenience, by building near the upper end of the garden, but was discouraged by the prospect of the additional expense this would occasion.

All the houses in this street are borough-hold, except this belonging to the Rector, and another opposite to it belonging to Miss Swinnerton.

THE NEW STREET.

The name of this street, as well as it situation, shews, that it was built after several of the rest, and yet it seems to be as old as the borough. At first it contained twenty-six burgages, thirteen on a side. The land annexed to each burgage was about fifty or sixty yards in length, and seventeen or twenty in breadth, for there is some variation in the measure. At the time of the survey in 1561, Rowland Lacon, of Cotton, esq. had four burgages in this street, Thomas Barnes of the Lowe, had one, and Margaret Lee, two. She was the heiress of Richard Hottal, and the relict of John Allanson. In the civil war all the burgages were destroyed that lay north of Whitchurch gate, being thirteen, or fourteen at least.

At that time William Allanson, gentleman, had a good house in this street, and a large estate in the township of Wem, for which, he was obliged to compound by paying the sum of £80. His father, and grandfather had been bailiffs of this manor, that is receivers of the rents and profits due to the lord. His son Francis married a lewd, and extravagant virago from London, who by her riotous and expensive living, ran him so far in debt, that he was forced to sell his estate to his mercer, Matthew

Evans, who soon disposed of it again to John Shinton, mercer, collector of the money arising from Wembrief.

The four burgages which I have in this street formerly belonged to the Cadmans, afterwards to the Whitfields, of the Lowe, from one of which family they came to Richard Newns, of Lee Brockhurst, from him to Bichard Lyth, of Acton Reynold, and so to me. The house wherein I live stood once at Edstaston. After the fire it received four, or five families. When it came into my hands, was framed anew, and made a convenient dwelling. At present all the houses in this street are borough-hold, except one that formerly belonged to Edstaston chapel, and two belonging to me, which are freehold.

THE LANES OF WEM.

MAIDEN-LANE is a short alley between the Draw-well fold and the High-street. This name is so little known that I have met with but one person that could inform me of it. In this lane there are only three houses. That built by Thomas Griffiths is freehold, the other two are borough-hold.

LEEK-LANE is more considerable, but I cannot account for that name. It is commonly called the old Chapel-street, from a barn which the dissenters

converted into a meeting-house, and which the mob pulled down and burnt in 1715. Part of the houses are borough-hold, and part copyhold; a little below this lane is a noted well, called Oliver's well, I suppose from a family of that name who lived near it.

THE DARK LANE is so called from its late obscurity and darkness, occasioned by its hollow situation, and the trees that covered it. It is as it were the sink of the town, has no pavement, and for that reason is very dirty in winter. The houses on the west side are borough-hold, on the east copyhold.

THE HORSE FAIR which has been lately called Ireland, begins at the school bridge, and reaches to the end of the town. It contains nothing remarkable but the school, which was built in 1670. a large and handsome fabric of brick quoined with free stone, sixty-one feet in length, twenty-four in breadth, and twenty in height to the roof, which is covered with slate, and in the middle has a turret for a bell given by William Adams, nephew of the founder. The first story contains the first and second school, illuminated by twelve windows. ceiling is lofty, the walls are wainscotted. second story contains the third school and the library, in the former of which, plays were used to be acted by the scholars. In the latter is a small, but good collection of books, most of which were given

by young gentlemen who had their education in this school, and all in my time.

Near the end of this lane towards Horton, formerly stood St. John's chapel, which was a chauntry endowed with lands, of which a field containing fifteen butts lay in the township of the Lowe, for the maintenance of a priest, daily saying, or singing mass for the soul of the donor, and such other as he annointed. There was also in such settlements a provision for a certain number of poor people, to where aims were distributed on the anniversary day of the founders. This chapel was suppressed, and its lands seized in 1548. The preamble of the act importing, that such foundations did promote superstition, and error, particularly the vain opinion of purgatory, and of masses satisfactory for the deceased. At this end of the town there is a well of excellent water, in the memory of man, called St. John's well, from the chapel above mentioned, but now generally the soap well, from the use its water is generally applied to.

Persons of Note, Natives, or Inhabitants of Wein.

PERSONS OF NOTE, NATIVES, OR INHABITANTS OF WEM.

THOMAS LAWRENCE, M. A. Fellow of St. John's college, Cambridge, and chief master of the free school at Shrewsbury, was probably a native of Wem, and seems to have passed the last stage of his life in this town. It is evident from the register that he was buried here January 28rd, 1629.

Sir THOMAS ADAMS, knight and baronet, was born in Wem. Of him I have given a large account in the chapter of, "The Founder of the School."

RICHARD RODERICK, B. D. eldest son of the chief master of this name, was student of Christ church, in Oxford, and vicar of Blandford, in Dorsetshire. He was presented by the dean, and chapter of Winchester to this living, said to be worth £400. per annum. He has published one sermon against schisms and divisions among christians, preached in his own church December 19th, 1682, at the visitation of the bishop of Bristol. His memory was so strong that it was reported of him, he could repeat verbatin any sermon he had lately heard.

CHARLES HODERICK, D. D. of whom I have given an account among the chief masters of Weinschool.

Persons of Note, Natives, or Inhabitants of Wem.

SAMUEL LAWRENCE, son of William Lawrence, dyer, was born in this town in 1661. his grammar education here under the Rodericks, and after the resignation of the last of them, at Newport under Mr. Edwards. Being furnished with school learning, he was instructed by Mr. Philip Henry, at Broad Oak; Mr. Tallents, at Shrewsbury; and Mr. Malden, at Alkington, near Whitchurch, in which last place he improved himself much in Greek and Hebrew. On Mr. Malden's death in 1681, he was sent to Mr. Charles Moreton's private academy, at Newington Green, near London. Here he went through a course of University learning. When the laws against dissenters obliged Moreton to break up his academy, Mr. Lawrence spent two, or three years as an assistant to a grammar school in Clerkenwell Close. Thence he was preferred to a domestic chaplain to the lady Irby, in Dean's yard, Westminster, with whom he continued till 1688, when Mr. Baxter and Mr. Philip honourably recommended him to be a minister to a dissenting congregation, at Nantwich, in Cheshire. He died at Nantwich, the 24th of April, 1712, in the fifty-first year of his age.

JOHN WHITFIELD, D. D. was born at Wem in 1681, educated at the free school there, admitted batchelor in Trinity college, Cambridge, in 1698, where he was successively chosen scholar, minor,

The Lord's Demesne in the Township of Wem.

and major fellow, steward of the college, latin, greek, and head lecturer, senior dean of the college. He was a favourite of the master, doctor Bently, who gave him the curacy of Haddenham, in the isle of Ely, worth £60. per annum. In 1724, he was presented by the said master, and senior fellows to the rectory of Dielebury, in Norfolk, of the yearly value of about £300. Here he married the daughter of William Palgrave, gentleman, with a fortune of £1100. He published three sermons, one of which was preached at an assizes at Ely, another at the bishop's visitation there, and the third before the university of Cambridge. He died of an atrophy October 13th, 1731, and in his epitaph has the character of, viz. Bonis literis, eloquio, et humanitate. Si quis alius, insignis.

JOHN TYLSTON, a pedler, was remarkable for his great age. He was a big boy at Edge-hill fight, died February 13th, 1733, and consequently could not be less than a hundred years old.

THE LORD'S DEMESNE IN THE TOWNSHIP OF WEM IN 1561.

HE lord's demesne signifies his manor house, or the place of his habitation, with the lands

The Lord's Demesse in the Township of Wesn.

annexed thereto, for the maintenance of his family. These lands were occupied by his servants and vassals, or upon his removal, or long absence set, or or leased to tenants.

The manor place at Wem is the alley's hill, a spend artificial mount, about eight yards high, with a level plain at the top, now about forty yards in diameter, encompassed with a fees eight yards broad. Mr. Wilson who lately held it sunk the hill six feet, and took up several large steps on the side opposite to the church. Mr. Henshaw the present occupier of it has carried off several loads of stone, and by frequent ploughing still lessens the height of it. Here the Pantulphs had a castle; for Hugo Pantulph obliged his free tenant at Sleap, and his heirs, to assist at the making of his castle, when the other free men assisted at it.

William le Boteler required Thomas Turry, of Wolverley, esq. and his heirs, to find one man to work one day in a week at his castle at Wem, when his other tenants were employed in the same service. This castle was destroyed in the latter end of the reign of Henry VI. Canden mentions a castle begun in this town, but never finished, which seems to relate to Ralph, lord Greystock's beginning to rebuild a castle, but not accomplishing it.

The Lord's Demesne in the Township of Wem.

The finelds called the Alleys, adjoining to the saite of the manor were part of the demesne lands. They had their name from the alleys, or walks formerly made in them. In 1561, they being eight acres, and another pasture and meadow, called, Brad Meadow, sixteen acres were held by John Daere, rector of Wem, at the yearly rent of sixteen shillings. In the neigh of James 1. a lease for nine hundred and ninety-nine years of these alleys, and certain lands in the pools was granted by the earl of Annodel, to the Stantons, of Newport, from whom it passed to the Abnets, of Stafford, from them to Miss Swinnerton, of Brad Meadow, now belongs to William Dymook, esq.

The mills were parcel of the demesne, but of them I spoke in the Mill-street.

The old Pool was comprehended under the demession it contained about two hundred acres of boggy, or mashy ground, formerly overgrown with withys and ollers, and the greater part of it in all seasons of the year usually overflowed with water, so that it was not passable for men, nor cattle. Here the tenants and burgesses of Wem had free common of pasture, it being all waste ground till the first year of queen Mary, 1553, when some parcels of it were inclosed, for then William, lord Dacre grants ed a lease for twenty-one years jointly, to five several

The Lord's Denuesne in the Township of Wem-

persons of so much of it as could be made dry land, at the annual rent of nine-pence an acre.

1586. About twelve years after the determination of this lease, Philip, earl of Arundel leased the said old Pool to Lawrence Bannister, esq. high steward of this manor, who caused a strand to be made along the brook, and by ditching, draining, and stocking, made divers parcels of it firm land, which he enclosed for his own use, or set to undertenants. In 1617, and some years following Ann, countess Dowager of Arundel expended about £80. in the further draining and improving the said ground. About 1619, she gave licence to sir Randulph Crew, to whom the township of Nonely then belonged, to enclose fifty acres of Wem Pool, and after that, the countess enclosed twenty acres more. Her son Thomas, earl of Arundel aliened all the Pool lands, either by sale, or what is equivalent thereto, a lease nine hundred and ninety-nine years. Mr. Barnes of the Lowe, who had a large share of them, built a farm house about the middle of the old Pool, which is now divided into a great number of rich meadows and pastures.

The new Pool Meadow six acres, now belonging to Mr. Green, of Stafford, the Foxly pasture and meadow five acres, which Mr. Wycherley retained when he sold the manor, the little Okenel seven The common Fields of Wem.

acres, and the Great Okenel ten acres, now called Okeleys, being in different hands, and a close lying between the Chapel field and middle field acre were demesne lands in 1561.

THE COMMON FIELDS OF WEM.

mon fields belonging to this town. They consisted of arable land, and were divided by stones, or other land marks, so that each proprietor knew his own ground which he ploughed and sowed, but when harvest was gathered in, their cattle ranged in common, and fed promiscuously.

The cross field at the east end of the town towards Soulton, took its name from a cross erected on that road, as was usual in popish countries.

The Chapel field extended towards Horton, and on each side of the way to the Lowe, and took its name from St. John's chapel above mentioned.

The Middle field was so called, because it did lie as it were in the middle of the other two, including a large compass of land on the left side the Edstaston road.

Charts granted to the Cotomans of Wem.

CHARTS GRANTED TO THE COTEMANS OF WEM.

Sciant præsentes et futuri, quod ego Willielmus Boteler, Dominus de Weme, dedi, concessi, et hac presenti charta mea confirmavi Willielmo Coteman de Weme, heredibus, et Assignatis suis, medietatem unius Bovellii terræ in campis de Weme, quam Rogerus Coteman quondam tenuit. Tradidi, et concessi prædicto Willielmo, heredibus, et assignatie euis, decem et quinque Acras, et quartam Partem unius acræ terræ; de quibus, sex acræ et quarta Pars unius acræ jacent jaxta Coteman's Wier, quas Rogerus Coteman quondam tenuit; et sen acree terree jacent apud Rorwen hall, et una acra et quarta Pars unius acræ terræ jacent apud Hacliplett, quas Adam de Harper quondam tenuit; et una acra et quarta Pars unius acræ terræ jacent junta Kingeshall, junta terram ejusdem Williebmi, Habendas et tenendas de me et hæredibus meis prædicto Willielmo Coteman, et hæredibus, et assignatis suis, libera quiete bene et in pace in perpetuum. Reddentibus inde annuatim mihi et hæredibus meis, 7s. 1d. argenti ad duos terminos viz. medietatem ad festum annuncia-Honis Beatæ Mariæ, et aliam medietætem ad festum St. Michaelis Archangeli. Bt cum dictus Willielmus et Hæredes et Assignati sui obierint,

Charter granted to the Cotemans of Wem.

dabunt mihi melius eorum animalium nomine Et si contingat quod pradictus Willielmus vel Hæredes vel assignati sui super prædictam terram edificare velint, reddent mihi et haeredibus meis annuatim pro illa acra terræ super quam edificaverunt 1s. ad terminos prædictos equali portione, et talliabunt sicut alii tenentes in eodem Manerio. Et si contingat, quod Hæredes praedicti Willielmi fuerint infra ætatem ad decessum praedicti Willielmi, tunc ego prædictus Willielmus de Boteler, et Hæredes mei possidebimus custodiam et maritagium hæredum suorum, usque ad plenam ætatem suam, et si fuerint plenae ætatis, tunc duplicabunt mihi et haeredibus meis Redditus prædictos, nomine relevii, et qua volo quod hæc mea traditio concessio et præsentis chartæ meæ confirmatio firma sit et stabit in perpetuum, hanc chartam sigilli mei impressione His testibus Ricardo de Boteler. roboravi. Willielmo de Hopton et aliis. Data apud Weme die veneris in vigilia conversionis St. Pauli; anno regni regis Edwardi, filii Edwardi secundi.

This charter was granted by William le Boteler, and dated at Wem, January 24th, 1309. It is a valuable curiosity, as it shews the form of ancient conveyances, the feudel system then established, and the condition of many free tenants, now called freeholders, in those early times.

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A Description of the Charter granted to the Cotemans of Wem.

It is observable, that ancient charters were written on paper, not on parchment, in the latin, and not in the English tongue; and that the consideration money is not mentioned, though there is no doubt but that they were generally deeds of purchase.

Free tenants paid taxes only to their superior lord. The barons and knights were answerable to the king for the talliage incident to their estates; but then they had power of levying the same talliage on their inferior tenants, in proportion to the lands they held.

By licence from the king, the barons and knights might dispose of part of their estates in fee farm, so called, because a farm rent is reserved upon a grant in a fee. The rent appointed in this charter is seven shillings and one penny, which is about three-pence half-penny per acre. And three-pence half-penny in the reign of Edward II. was equivalent to three shillings and three half-pence, now at the death of a tenant in fee farm, a heriot was due to the lord, as at present from copyholders. The heriot appointed in this charter is not the best beast, but one of the better sort, and that in discharge of all the other goods of the tenant.

If at the decease of the tenant his heir happened to be a minor, the lord seised on the whole estate,

The Charter of Lady Perrers, of Wem.

and received the profits of it till his ward came of age, only providing for his maintenance and education.

The lord disposed of his ward in marriage, and had an action against him if he presumed to marry without his consent.

If the heir was of full age, before he could enter on his estate, he was obliged to pay a relief to the lerd, of much the same nature as the fines now paid by copyholders. The relief appointed in this charter is one year's rent extraordinary, that is fourteen shillings and two-pence for his first year, which is equivalent to seven pound one shilling and eightpence at present.

Note; that in fee farms, heriot, wardship, marriage, and relief could not be demanded without special reservation in writing, as in the charter above.

The charter of lady Ferrers was dated December 28th, 1409, and expressed in these words which I have written at length, and not in the abreviations usual in such writings.

Sciant praesentes et futuri quod ego Elizabetha Ferrers, baronissa de Weme, dedi concessi et hac presenti charta mea confirmavi Willielmo Coteman,

The Charter of Lady Perrers of Wess.

et aliciæ uxori suae, unum gurgitem vocatum Coteman's Weir, cum libera piscaria extendente a molendino et gurgitibus de Weme usque ad predictum gurgitem viz. Coteman's Weir. Habendum et tenendum praedictum gurgitem cum praedicta libera piscaria in generali, praefato Willielmo et aliciæ uxori suae haeredibus et assignatis suis libera quiete bene et in pace in perpetuum. Reddentibus inde annuatim mihi et haeredibus meis 5s. et servitium inde debitum et consuetum, et ego praedicta Elizabetha et haeredes mei totum praedictum gurgitem cum praedicta libera piscaria in generali, praefatis Willielmo et aliciæ uxori suae, eorum haeredibus et assignatis contra omnes gentes warrantizabimus et in perpetuum defendemus. In cujus Rei testimonio huic presenti cartae sigillum meum apposui. His Testibus Roberto Mollington et aliis. Data 28 Die Decembris anno regni regis Henrici 4 decimo.

From this charter I shall take occasion to remark that the custom of warranting estates in conveyances had been then introduced, that the rent of five shillings in the reign of Henry IV. was equivalent to two pound at present, that the witness Robert Mollington was brother, or near relation to the lady Ferrers's late husband, sir Thomas Mollington; that the grantee William Coteman was of a family that had flourished long at Wem; that the Weir still retains their name, though the family had been long

The Name, Boundaries, Extent, Soil, and Valuation of Edstaston.

extinct, and the premises to the Thurleighs above two hundred years ago. The Thurleighs were then a considerable family, but they likewise are extinct, and the Weir and right of fishing above specified are reverted to the lord.

EDSTASTON.

The Name, Boundaries, Extent, Soil, and Valuation of Edstaston.

THE name Edstaston, which has obtained for some hundreds of years, is a contraction of Edstanston found in ancient writings, and signifying the town of Edstan; who probably was the founder of its chapel, and had his seat on the north side of it, where the scite of an ancient building is still visible. The fine north door of the chapel is opposite to it; and seems to have been made for the convenience of the family that resided there.

The township of Edstaston is bounded by Wem on the south, Lowe and Northwood on the west, Whixall and Cotton on the north, and Lacon on the east.

Its length from Quino brook, its northern boundary to Mr. Basnet's house is a mile and half. Its breadth from east to west is about a mile.

The Tenure, Woods, and Common Fields of Edstaston.

The sail is cold and moist, being generally a sort of clay. It produces excellent wheat and oats; but the dairy turns to more account than tillage.

In respect to land-tax, this township is valued at £380. 6s. 8d. per annum; so that the sum charged upon it at 1s. in the pound is £19. 0s. 4d.

THE TENURE, WOODS, AND COMMON FIELDS OF EDSTASTON.

At the survey in 1561, there were but three freeholders in this township, sir Arthur Mainwaring of a messuage, and near twelve acres; Rowland Lacon, esq. of near twenty-six acres; and John Hochekis of half a pasture, called the Moss Pool. All the rest of the township was copyhold. But whilst Playsters and Onslow were lords of Wem, they enfranchised so many estates, that at present the freehold lands exceed the copyhold.

The new Park was formerly reckoned one of the five woods within this lordship; but it has been so well cleared of trees, that no remains of a wood are left. Chetal wood formerly belonged to the lord; but at the survey in 1561, it was held by sir Arthur Mainwaring as copyhold, at the rent of six shillings per annum. This wood is still preserved,

The Lord's Demesne in the Township of Wem.

consists of oaks, a mile in circuit. Its name was sometimes written Chetwal, Chittal, and Chitto wood.

In ancient times Editasion had three common fields, of which the greater part was enclosed near two hundred years ago.

Whorrow field lies between Creamore farm, and the first house on the road to Whitchurch. It extended on both sides that way, where the butts thrown up by the plough are still visible. Its name is retained by one, or more closes that were once part of it.

The Chapel field was so called, because it was near to the chapel. The way opposite to the great south gate of the chapel led to it.

The Cross field lay chiefly on the east side of the Whitchurch road, extending westwards to the new Park. The name of it indicates that there was, or had been a cross in the way that led through it; probably at the turning to Edstaston hall. Such croses were erected to put travallers in mind of Christ's passion.

The Lord's Demesne in Edstaston.

THE LORD'S DEMESNE IN EDSTASTON IN 1561.

Whilst the lord's resided at Wem the new Park was enclosed with pales, and stocked with wild beasts of chase. At the survey in 1561, it was considered only as a wood, of which the herbage, and half the profit of the pannage was set at twenty shillings a year, the other half of the pannage was reserved to the lord. At present it is divided into pastures and meadows, which make two farms, besides two fields belonging to a third. The Park house is a convenient dwelling, belonging to the larger of the two farms. The other messuage is at the extremity of the Park, where it borders upon Whixall. The circumference of the whole is two measured miles. It is easy to trace the bounds of it though not one pale is left. Thomas Adams, esq. afterwards knight and baronet, bought the Park lands as freehold. Sir Charles, his grandson mortgaged them with other estates in Northwood, to his mother-in-law, the lady Roll, who by will devised them to several persons. At present the proprietors are so many, and perhaps some of them under age, that this had obstructed the intended sale of them.

Creamore house and farm were also part of the lord's demesne. The right name is Cranmore, as

The Lord's Demesne in Edstaston.

it was formerly written: importing that a great part of it was a moor, much frequented by cranes; but time has contracted, and softened the word to Creamore, as it is now commonly pronounced. the Saxonsperiod it belonged to some considerable person, whose mansion house was at some distance from the present dwelling place. The scite thereof is overgrown with bushes and trees, but the broad and deep moat about it is still visible, and will long continue so. At the conquest it was given to William Pantulph, and from him descended to William, lord Dacre, who in 1530, 22nd Henry VIII. leased it to Richard Cooper, for the term of fortyone years, at the annual rent of £6. 6s. 8d. now a freehold estate, having been sold in the reign of James I, to the Higginsons, who lived upon it a long time. It was lately the estate of Robert Jones, esq. of Gray's Inn, who at his death left £100. to be distributed among the poor of Wem At present it belongs to Mr. Green, of parish. Stafford

A messuage and lands, now called the High fields, from one of the pastures of thirteen acres which formerly bore that name, was also part of the demesne. This estate at present belongs to Mr. Colthwest, of Chester, as long ago it did to the Sambrokes. Opposite to the present dwelling house on the other side of the road there stood formerly

an habitation which seems to have been built in troublesome times, for the residence of some good family, because it was moated round. Perhaps the Sambrokes lived here till they removed to Wem; where 4th Henry, 1489, John Sambroke was amerced three shillings and four-pence for an affray and bloodshed. In 1683, this estate belonged to John Shenton, in 1689 to Mr. Archer, in 1692 to Mr. John Bill, whose daughter by marriage carried it to Mr. Colehurst, the Presbyterian minister at Whitchurch.

THE PRINCIPAL ESTATES IN EDSTASTON, WHICH WERE NEVER PART OF THE LORD'S DEMESNE, 1751.

Time has made a great alteration in these estates, but a much greater in the families that occupied them, it being observable, that there is but one person now living in this township, Mr. John Hinton, whose ancestors lived here two hundred years ago.

At the east end of the chapel is a handsome messuage, and free estate of the Lloyds of the Ford, near Oswestry, which in 1689 came to them by the marriage of the heiress of the Hinstocks. It belonged to the chaplains of Edstaston, till 1540 or 45,

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The principal Estates in Edstaston.

when all free chapels were dissolved, and William, lord Dacre, then lord of this manor, seised the revenue of our ladies of Edstaston, into his own hands, though it properly belonged to the crown, and in 1561 granted this estate to William Ash, as tenant or copyholder, if the latter, it has been since enfranchised, probably in the time of Playters and Onslow.

At the west end of the chapel is a house and lands, late the copyhold estate of the Wellses, and earlier of the Moodies, now of Mrs. Marygold, of Lee Gomery, near Wellington, being purchased by her father, Mr. Andrew Downes, 1707.

Near to the chapel there are two good houses and estates, belonging to the Paynes. One is freehold, the other copyhold. The freehold estate the inheritance of the Ellyses, has a handsome brick house upon it fronting the great road, in a great measure built by the late Mr. Daniel Payne, and now inhabited by major Sutton. The copyhold once belonged to the Hanwoods, and before them to the Olivers. It is now much enlarged by the addition of another copyhold estate purchased of Mr. Payne, of Weston. About 1650 Thomas Payne, of Moreton Corbet, gentleman, married the daughter and heir of Allen Ellys, of Edstaston, who February 17th, 1653 purchased of Playters and Onslow the freehold of several

copyhold estates, containing one hundred acres, or thereabouts. This Thomas had three sons. Walter the eldest, Richard who never married, and Daniel from whom the Paynes of Nonely are descended. Walter married the daughter and coheir of Mr. John Edwards, of Ellesmere, by whom he had Thomas, Walter, and Daniel, which last after he had felt the greatest want, and hardship at sea, recovered most of his paternal estate from William Kynaston, of Ruyton, to whom his eldest brother had devised it. By his first wife, relict of Mr. Thomas Harwood, of Bridgmere, in Cheshire, he had two sons, Thomas and Walter. By his second wife Frances, relict of Mr. Richard Basnet, of Radnal, in Shropshire, he had three sons and a daughter. He purchased the copyhold estates in Edstaston, was of a strong robust constitution, and might have lived to a great age if in his seventieth year he had not miserably perished by falling into a tub of scalding water. His eldest son Thomas by his first wife married Mrs. Sarah Holmbroke, of the Black Park, in the parish of Whitchurch, and died before his father, but left a son Thomas, a minor. Allen Ellys died in 1666, Thomas Payne, his son-in-law in 1684, Thomas's son Walter four years before, Walter's son Thomas in 1706, and his brother Daniel in 1750.

The four houses above mentioned, with one other that is considerable, are properly called Edstaston, which is one computed mile north of Wem.

Edstaston Hall a large timber house, had its name from its being in later times the residence of the principal family in the township; for here lived the Mainwarings, a younger branch of the Mainwarings, of lghtfield, whose arms are in a window of the chapel. In the reign of Henry VII. T. Mainwaring, esq. purchased two copyhold estates in Edstaston and Cotton, one of John Vazhan, the other of John This Thomas died 1508, and his son John was admitted tenant in his stead. April 29th, 1591, 23rd Elizabeth, George Mainwaring, esq. on the death of his father sir Arthur Mainwaring, was admitted by his attorney, and the same day granted a lease of his messuage of Edstaston Hall, with its appurtenances; the estsate above the Chettal wood to George Mainwaring, gentleman, for eighty years, if the said George, gentleman, and his brother Edward, or either of them should so long In the time of the commonwealth this estate was enfranchised by Playters and Onslow, with a reservation of only six-pence a year, chief rent. the reign of William III. 1697, Charles Mainwaring, of Ightfield, esq. sold it to Thomas Catherock, of Stoke Park, gentleman. From the Catherocks it lately passed to the Cooks of the same place. In the house there is nothing remarkable but a great profusion of timber. In the farm there is a small turbary, or turf moor, about two yards deep, in which are found the trunks of oaks, firs, and birch

trees, severed from the roots, which continue erect as the grew.

At the Rye Bank is a good house and freehold estate belonging to Richard Goldisbrough, gentleman, descended from an ancient family seated at Goldisburgh, in Yorkshire; whereof was doctor Godfrey Goldisbrough, bishop of Gloucester in the reign The bishop's eldest son John of queen Elizabeth. in 1618, purchased for the sum of one thousand two hundred and eighty pounds, the estate of sir Francis Lacon, in this parish. He married Rebecca, daughter of Rowland Lacon, esq. and by her at his death left a son Richard, an infant; who successively married two wives, Elizabeth daughter of William Basnet, of the county of Denbigh, gentleman, by whom he had no issue male, and Frances, daughter of Mr. Vincent Rodenhurst, of High Ercal, by whom he had two sons, Joseph and Benjamin. January 1st, 1675, by his second wife he became possessed of this estate, and several others. Joseph married Mrs. Ann Atcherley, of Wolverley, and 1685 dying before his father left issue only a daughter; so Benjamin succeeded to the estate, and by Ann, relict of Mr. Edward Garland, of Sleap, had two sons, of which one died very young, and the other Richard, the present gentleman was bred up to the law, and married Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Sandford, of Sandford, esq. by whom he has no issue. Bishop Goldis-

brough died in 1604, his son John in 1620, his son Richard 1602, his son Benjamin in 1730.

At the Paddock Green is a freehold messuage and estate, which passed by purchase from the Lacons to Goldisbroughs, and by Mr. Richard Goldisbrough now living, has been sold to Mr. Price, receiver of the excise. This and the last mentioned farm but one tenement, which, with lands in Cotton township, Rowland Lacon, esq. claimed, to hold free in virtue of a charter granted 30th Edward III. to Nicholas de Cooton.

The Foxholes is a copyhold estate, which formerly belonged to John Rippon, and after his death was divided between his five daughters. John Menlove marrying one of them, he or his posterity by decrees became possessed of most of the other shares. This was a Roman Catholic family, and by one of them the present house was built. The Menloves, 1689, sold to the Glovers, and they to Mr. Andrew Downes, of Preston Brockhurst, whose daughter Mrs. Marygold is now in possession of the whole estate, having purchased of me five small pieces of land that were parcel of it.

The Ash house estate is copyhold consisting of several fields. For many generations it belonged to the Higginsons, in 1684 to the Pidgeons, 1718

The principal Estates in Edstaston.

they sold it to Mr. Downes above mentioned, who pulled down the house, and annexed the land to the farm at the Foxholes.

Near the Foxholes is a neat box of a house, lately erected by John Groom, the rooms of which are too much contracted by the narrowness of its plan; a small estate belongs to it.

The messuage of the Pool Head took its name from its being built at the head of Castor's pool; which was formerly above a mile in compass, lving chiefly in the township of Whixall, but partly in those of Education and Northwood. The water has been time out of mind drained off, and the soil converted into a great number of meadows, now the property of the earl of Bradford. The dwelling house formerly stood at a small distance from the present, and was mosted round. Part of the most still remains. and has its complement of water, the rest of it has been filled up. The copyhold estate belonging to this messuage was much larger formerly than it is at present, being the ancient inheritance of the Moodies, who got it enfranchised by Playters and Onslow. The Moodies sold it to the Menloves, proprietors of the Foxholes; the Menloves 1689 to the Norcops, a daughter of which family by marriage carried to Mr. Sandford, of Whitchurch; and Mr. Sandford 1709 sold it to Mr. John Hill, of Hawkstone,

The principal Estates in Edstasten.

gentleman, who granted a lease of it to Mr. John Bolas, deceased, for three lives.

At Quino Brook is a messuage and estate, which for some hundreds of years has belonged to the Hintons. At the survey in 1561 it was copyhold, in the tenure of Allen Hinton, son of William, of Newtown, which Allen died in 1685, and his son Allen in 1617. William, son of this last in 1658 procured the enfranchisement of his estates in Edstaston, Cotton, and Newtown, and died at Ightfield in 1685. His son William died in 1702, and his son of the same name in 1750.

At Pepper-street is a good freehold estate belonging to Mr. Thomas Payne. The messuage is in Edstacton, but the greatest part of the estate lies in Cotton. It seems to consist of two or three ancient tenements of the Ellyses and Mainwarings. Allen Ellys procured an enfranchisement of them in 1653.

At Pepper-street Mr. George Tyler has a copyhold estate, part of which formerly belonged to Randal Hinton, of Cotton, and part to Robert Sherratt, of Pepper-street, whose daughter carried it by marriage to the Moltons, and Molton sold it to Mr. Arthur Tyler. In 1651 John Tyler, of Cotton, was possessed of the former share; in 1673 his youngest brother George, of Darleston, had purchased it of M m

him, and not long after was employed to manage the suit of the copyholders against the lord Wycherley. His son George was clerk to Thomas Hill, of Soulton, esq. his son Arthur was a tanner, but left that trade to follow husbandry. He built the present house. His son George is an apothecary and surgeon in Whitchurch.

EDSTASTON CHAPEL.

Edstaston chapel was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and therefore in ancient writings it is usually called our Lady's chapel of Edstaston. The 8th of September being the festival of the Nativity of the blessed Virgin, was the day on which it was dedicated, for which the wake is kept on that day, or the sunday following.

The founder I take to have been Edstan, who probably was the ancient lord of this township before the conquest. He founded it for the health and welfare of his own soul, and perhaps of the souls of some of his relations, friends, or benefactors; for whose benefit masses were continually sung here. For in those early times it was an established doctrine that masses were serviceable to the dead, would abate the pains of purgatory, and at last deliver souls out of it. Under this persuasion it is no

wonder that men of great estates applied a small part of them in making a prevision for the next world.

To say, or sing masses for the dead was the design of all free chapels and chantries; and that the chapel of Edstaston was one of this sort appears from the loss of its endowment upon their suppression. By the statutes of 37th Henry VIII. and 2nd Edward VI. the chapels themselves as well as their houses and lands were vested in the king, who gave, or sold most of them to persons who pulled them down to use the materials. But this chapel though shut up for some time escaped the general ruin, and has for some ages been reckoned a member of Wem church. In the times of popery mass was sung here every day for the advantage of the deceased, and on Sundays the usual church service was performed for the benefit of the living, and so this chapel was of great use to the people of the neighbourhood, by saving them the trouble of going to the parish church. It was not only independent of the rector of Wem, but also free from the visitation of the bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, who neither instituted nor inducted the incumbent, so that in this respect it was much on the same footing as dona-It is a large and lofty structure of the Gothic order, twenty-three feet wide within the walls, and lately above ninety feet in length, at present eightytwo and a half. It is remarkable that the doors and

the carples of the old roof are not cut with a saw, but hewn with an axe. June 19th, 1723, the inside and middle of the west-end wall fell down in the night, and the roof was so much decayed, that it was necessary to take the greatest part of it down. Twelve feet in length of the roof had been framed anew six years before. In 1724 the new roof was carried on to the west-end wall, which was handsomely rebuilt of free stone, with a large window after the modern fashion. To lesson the charge, a licence was obtained of the bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, to make the chapel ten or eleven feet shorter than it had been. Several inhabitants of the chapelry of Newtown refused to contribute to the repairs, but a process being commenced against them, they submitted to pay their quotas, and the charge of the law.

The ancient splendour may be inferred from its floor being laid with tiles, which exhibited flowers and other figures of divers colours, from the devices painted in the windows, where the colours are beautiful and lively, and differed through the body of the glass; and from the inner roof of the chancel, consisting of boards on which the stars were painted, as shining in the firmament, but time has so impaired their lustre, that they are scarcely discernable. In one of the south windows are the arms of the Mainwarings; two Barrs Gules in a field

argent, with a crescent, to indicate a younger branch. In the east window is a figure of a noble person in a rich robe sitting on a chair, with a table before him, and a white rose upon it, to denote his attachment to the house of York.

There are some remains which shew the superstition of popish times, as 1st, two stands cut in stone on each side the Altar, to bear the tapers that usually burn there. 2nd, Two bases of stone, one jutting out of the east, the other out of the north walk. On the former stood the image of the blessed Virgin, patroness of the chapel. On the other the image of some other Saint. 3rd, Three steps of stone beneath the south window in the chancel, designed for some use of which I can give no account. 4th, A sort of cupboard near the Altar, for the reservation of the consecrated host. 5th, Two stone basons opposite to each other in the walls of the chapel, one on the north side being round, and seven inches in diameter under an arch of stone, the other in the south wall being square, and eight inches and a half in diameter. The use of these cavities probably was to hold holy water, there being holes at the bottom of each to let it run into the wall when they had no further occasion for it. On the north side of the Altar there formerly was a sacristy, or vestry where the sacred utensils and priest's vestments were kept, and where the priest drest, and undressed himself

before, and after service. The door place is still visible, and I had an opportunity of seeing one of iron hooks on which the door turned. Before the west-end wall fell, there rested on it a small pillar of stone resembling a chimney, but it could not serve for that use because it was not hollow, but perfectly solid, perhaps an image, or a cross that stood upon The silver plate belonging to this chapel is only a paten and a chalice, the former was bought by me in 1722, with money given at the sacrament. other was the gift of Mr. John Bolas, junior, of the Pool Head in 1728. At the same time his sister. Ann Shore, of Edstaston hall, gave a scarlet carpet for the Communion table, with a border of silver lace.

Upon the restoration of Charles II. the chapel walls were adorned with the king's arms, the portrait of death, and several inscriptions. In 1710, the porch of the chapel was handsomely rebuilt with free stone. In 1727, the king's arms were painted on canvas, and the other decorations of the wall renewed. At the same time the pulpit was painted at my expense. In 1749, the new gates of the chapel yard were made. This chapel has been well supplied, there being preaching twice every Sunday throughout the year, except on sacrament days.

The Endowment of Edstaston Chapel.

THE ANCIENT ENDOWMENT OF EDSTASTON CHAPEL.

This chapel, or rather the chantry founded in it was formerly endowed with a good estate in Edstaston, consisting of a messuage (which appears to be near the same as is now held by John Moreton, junior.) with the gardens, orchards, barns, bakehouses, and other buildings to the said messuage belonging, and the following lands, Ridley's Leasow lying up to the gardens and orchards, and making with them six acres; a meadow, having Ridley's Leasow on the north, one acre; a meadow inclosed in the Chapel field, called Hallywell Meadow, one acre; a pasture, called the Rye Croft, having the lane on the west, four acres; Ridley's Moor, lying up to Bannister's wood, called Shetenhurst, on the east, six acres; the Pool Leasow having Castor's Pool on the west, three acres; and three nooks of land lying separately in the three common fields of Edstaston, nine acres in each field.

Here are forty-eight computed acres, which might amount to sixty measured ones, and these at ten shillings an acre be worth thirty pounds per annum.

Besides, there were two messuages, and some lands in Wem belonging to this chapel, viz. two

The Chaplains of Edstaston.

crofts adjacent to the messuages, of which one contained an acre, the other half one, and a field adjoining to Creamore farm on the north, and an annuity of one shilling and six-pence charged on some lands in the township of Wem, perhaps for an obit.

Upon the whole, the profits of the chaplain must have amounted to about forty pounds a year according to the present valuation of houses and lands. And yet in 1561, the agents of lord Dacre by copy of court granted this whole estate to William Ashe, at the annual rent £2. 8s. Od. which equivalent to £9. 12. Od. at present, considering that the value of money is sunk three parts in four since that time. But Ashe was to defend it at his own expense against the claims of queen Elizabeth.

THE CHAPLAINS OF EDSTASTON:

It is impossible to discover so much as the names of the incumbents of this chapel during its prosperity. Richard Nichols was the last that enjoyed the full revenue described in the last chapter, and the first that was dispossessed of it by the act of 2nd Edward VI. 1548. By this act certain commissioners were impowered to allow what pension they thought convenient to those that were turned out of such foundations; and it appears from a record dated in

The Chaplains of Edstasion.

1553, that they did settle £2. 9s. 4d. per annum on Mr. Nichols, which was equal to ten pounds a year at present. How long he lived to receive this pension, and how long the chapel was shut up is uncertain. But I know that it was shut up in 1561.

The first rector of Wem that was so good as prefer conscience to interest out of his abundance, allowed a competent salary to a curate at this chapel, which I suppose was thirty pounds per annum, as it has continued from time immemorial.

1640. JOHN BISBYE is the next chaplain I meet with. In 1642, he lived in Cotton, for he is assessed there three shillings and four-pence for his goods in a tax levied at that time. Six years after this he had a daughter baptized. As I find no account of his death, or ejectment, I suppose he removed to a better place.

SAMUEL TAYLOR succeeded him about 1650. Mr. Parsons allowed him the great tithes of Edstaston and Cotton, for serving the curacy. Perhaps they were valued at about thirty pounds per annum, though now they are set at seventy four pounds. In 1662, he was ejected by the Bartholomew act, and became a preacher among the Presbyterians. See dissenting ministers at Wem.

The Chaplains of Edstaston.

1662. ROBERT SMITH succeeded Mr. Taylor, and in 1674 was removed hence to the curacy of Wem. He was a single man. See more of him among the curates of Wem.

Newtown to this curacy in 1674. He had no university education, never wore a gown, preached in a surplice. His sermons were mean, and yet the people had some regard for him. See third masters of Wem school.

JOHN COLLIER came in about 1688, upon the resignation of Mr. Cartwright. See an account of him among the second masters of Wem school.

SAMUEL GARBET in 1713, succeeded Mr. Collier, who then resigned the chapel to him, as before he had done the school. The curacy was given me by doctor Chandler, to whom I had been recommended by Richard, earl of Bradford, and Henry, lord Newport. I have now preached at the chapel near thirty-eight years, which is a much longer time than any of my predecessors did, of whom we have any knowledge.

The Name, Boundaries, Extent, Manor, Soil, and Valuation of Cotton.

COTTON.

The Name, Boundaries, Extent, Manor, Soil, and Valuation of Cotton.

HE name is written several ways, as Cooton, Coton, and Cotton; being derived from the Saxon, cot, a small house, and tou, a town. The name imports, that it was a town consisting chiefly of small houses, such as were usually built about woods by the poorest sort of people, for the conveniency of fuel.

On the north it is bounded by Tilstock, on the south by Edstaston, on the east by Steel, and on the west by Whixall. There are four small brooks which separate this township from those that border on it.

Its length from Quino brook which divides it from Edstaston, to Sandland's brook which divides it from Tilstock is two miles. Its breadth from east to west is about a mile and a half.

It formerly had the honour of being a manor, as appears from the book of survey 1561, where Joan Pryn, and Ann Burton are said to hold lands of lord Dacre, as of his manor of Cotton in Wem, i. e. in the parish of Wem. It was one of the twenty-eight lordships which Roger de Montgomery, earl of Shrewsbury, gave to William Pantulph.

The Tenure, Woods, and Common Firsts of Course.

The soil is a mixture of earth and clay, and when turned up by the plough is a reddish, but in a few places of a whitish colour. It is generally very ebb, about six or eight inches deep, and so naturally poor, but capable of improvement. The usual manure is muck and marl, the last of which lies about two feet below the surface of the earth. As the ground is cold and wet, it agrees best with wheat and eats; and yet when marled it will bear good barley. But the greatest profit arises from the dairy, of which the tenants chiefly make their rents.

In respect to the land-tax, this township is valued at £269. 3s. 4d. per annum. So that the sum charged upon it at one shilling in the pound is £13. 9. 2d.

THE TENURE, WOODS, AND COMMON FIELDS OF COTTON.

At the survey in 1561, by far the greatest part of Cotton was copyhold, but there were some free-holders, viz. sir Arthur Mainwaring, of lghtfield, of a house and twenty-eight acres of land in Edstaston and Cotton, which I suppose are now part of Edstaston Hall farm; John Bartley of one close jointly with Mr. Arthur Mainwaring; John Higonson of a messuage and lands, most of which did lie between the new Park on the west, and Yocking's lane, i. e.

The Tenure, Woods, and Common Fields of Cotton.

the road to Whitchurch on the east; Richard Higonson of the messuage and estate now held by John Morton, senior; Joan Pryn and Ann Burton of lands afterwards parcel of the Woods, now of the Leigh's estate; and John Hinton of live ridges of land in the common field, called, Nether field. Several estates have been enfranchised since that time,

Cotton Wood was one of the five woods within the lordship of Wem. It is about three measured miles in circuit, and still retains the name of a wood, though there is scarce a tree left on it. The common feeds great numbers of sheep and other cattle, affords turf in its moors, and fish in two pools which turn the Wood-end mill, belonging to the school of Wem. The soil is the lords, but the inhabitants of the township have a right to the grass it bears, and therefore the lord cannot allenate, or inclose any part of it without their consent.

There were formerly three common fields belonging to Cotton, the names of which are found only in very ancient writings.

1st, The Hill field, or Great Hills was on that hilly ground to the west of Cotton wood. Allen Hotchkis, who lived at the house on the hill; Allen Higonson, who lived at the Wood-end hall, and Nicholas Calcott had land.

The principal Estates in Comma.

2nd, The Nether, Lower, or East field abouted on Moor lane, now called Warmoor lane, and extended south-west. Here the living of Mr. William Tyler, and those held by Richard Wood and William Price, had shares.

3rd, The Middle field was so called, because it did lie between the other two, abutting on Yocking's lane, i. e. the road to Whitchurch on the right hand as you go from Wem. Here Ralph Coton, Allen Sherratt, Richard Higonson, &c. had their particular divisions.

THE PRINCIPAL ESTATES IN COTTON IN THE YEAR 1751.

The whole township is called Cotton; but this name is more especially given to three houses that lie at a small distance from each other, about half a mile north of Quino Brook.

The first of these is copyhold, and with a small estate belonged formerly to John Higonson, who held the herbage, and half the panage of the new Park in Edstaston, at the rent of twenty shillings a year. From the heirs of this John Higonson it passed to the Sherrats, of Pepper-street. John Sherrat of that place, sold it to Robert Astley, of the Park house, whose eldest son Thomas now enjoys it.

The next messuage stands upon a freehold estate formerly in the possession of Richard Higonson, who at the survey produced an old deed with an ancient seal, but without date, whereby Madoc the son Yarefoot, son of Madoc, of Acton in Brumfield. gave to William the son of Roger de Tyshoo, four bovate of arable land lying in the fields of Cotton, in the fee of Wem. A boyate is about thirteen acres. Some part of this land had been sold by Richard Higonson, who produced other new deeds, whereby it appeared that he held a messuage with several parcels of land by knight's service, viz. the tenth part of a knight's fee, and did pay the same part, being ten shillings upon the death of his father, William Higonson. It is observable that many fields of the estate retain their ancient names; but they have often changed their owner. Mary, widow of John Higonson, of the Ashe house, by marriage brought this estate to Robert Adams, a tailor, who thereupon left off his trade. She survived this her second husband, and lived here in good credit many years. 1710. Her son sold the estate to Menlove of London, an attorney, and Menlove in 1717 to the honourable Richard Hill, who settled it on his nephew, sir Rowland Hill, of Hawkstone, the present possessor.

The third is a good house designed for a gentleman's family. For some generations it was inhabited

by a younger branch of the Wards. At the survey a small part of the estate was freehold, but the hulk of it copyhold. One of the Wards got that enfranchised by Playters and Onslow. Vifteen acres of it did lie up to the new Park on the south, twelve acres in the east-end field at Cotton, and two acres up to Cotton wood, not to mention other particulars. The proprietors will be found under Cotton hall; for both the estates successively belonged to the same person.

On the west side of Hill lane stands, the ancient freehold messuage of the Cotons, now called Cottons, who take their name from this town, and are branched out into several great families. At the time of the survey Ralph Coton, or Conton, then of Alkington, in the parish of Whitchurch, gentleman, son and heir of Thomas Cotton, produced three deeds, to prove that this his estate was freehold, of which the first was without date, the second was dated in the reign of Edward III. and made by Roger, the son of Roger de Cotton, to John de Chohesay, the third was dated in the reign of Edward III. to Roger, the son of Richard de Cotton, and Ellen his wife. Allen Cotton, grandson to Ralph above, was a draper in London, where he became so considerable, that in the 1st Charles I. 1625, he was made lord mayor, and knighted that year, if not sooner. He died in 1628, being seventy

years old. He was succeeded in this estate by his grandson Rowland, who was knighted in or before 1634. This estate belonged to William Cotton, of Alkington, esq. at the beginning of the civil war, from whom it has descended to the Cottons, of Bellaport, in the parish of Norton, esqrs. and still points out their original.

At the end of Hill lane, and at the top of the hill is a house and copyhold estate, which at the survey belonged to Allen Hotchkis, of a good family, which flourished much in this township. From the Hotchkises it passed to the Holegates, and from them to the Pools.

At the foot of the hill the same Allen Hotchkis had another copyhold messuage and estate; Arthur Hotchkis lived here 10th Charles I. and in some writings which I have seen had the title of gentleman. From the Hotchkises it came to the Wilkensons, who in my time sold it to Michael Brickdale, of Shrewsbury, esq.

Near to this is a copyhold messuage and estate of the Callcotts, which has continued the same, and descended from father to son above two hundred years. This cannot be said of any other estate, or family in this township except the Cottons. For in the space of time all the other estates have changed

their owners, and all that are considerable are now in the hands of tenants.

Cotton Hall is an ancient house, which about the reign of Edward VI. belonged to Nicholas Maddox, as did also the third estate mentioned in this chap-This Nicholas leaving no issue male, his large estate, of which only a small part was free, was inherited by his two daughters, Joan and Ann, of which, the former married one Pryn, and the other one Burton, and in 1561 they were both widows. They did not preserve the estate, for 32nd Elizabeth, Richard Ward, gentleman, was possessed of it, and upon that account, was that year made foreman of the Homage extra barram, or country jury at the first court at Wem, called in the name of queen Elizabeth. Being bred up to the law, he was chosen deputy steward of this manor, in which capacity he acted from 1608 to the time of his death in 1619. March 4th, 1614, he obtained a licence to eat flesh in Lent, which being the only one to be found in the parish register, it will not perhaps be improper to insert a copy of it. "For that Richard Ward, of Cotton, in the parish of Wem, and county of Salop, gentleman, is notoriously sick, and enforced for the recovery of his health to eat flesh for the time of his sickness. Therefore I Richard Sankey, parson of the said parish, for asmuch as in me lieth by force of authority to me given by the statute

made in the fifth year of our late sovereign lady Elizabeth, do licence the said Richard Ward to eat flesh according to the contents of the said statute, by me Richard Sankey, rector of Wem. Registered according to the statute in the presence, and with the consent of the church-wardens for the time being March 22nd, of the same month by reason of the continuance of the forementioned sickness."

His son Richard gave five pounds to Wem school. got his own estates made free, and in 1653 was one of the trustees for the enfranchised estates of Mr. He died about the time of the restoration. Richard, his son in 1663 married Mrs. Margaret Hill, of Soulton, and in 1669 Mrs. Eleanor Fog. In 1667 he gave timber to the value of ten pounds for the repair of Wem church. By his last wife he had a daughter Eleanor, who married George Sandford, of Twemblow, she dying in 1709 of the small pox, when far advanced in pregnancy, was buried at Wem at the same time, and in the same grave with two of her children, cut off by the same distemper. By his first wife he had also a daughter, Magdalene, who in 1685 married Robert Lee, of Winsham, in Cheshire, esq. The issue of this marriage were Robert and Thomas, which Robert an ideot left two daughters, the eldest of which married Charles Leg. of Albington, in the county of Chester, esq. who had one moiety of the estate; and Glegg, the youngest

daughter has another. Mr. Ward their great grandfather died in 1714.

The Wood-end hall at the time of the survey 1561, belonged to Allen Higonson, who had a large copyhold estate here. Before 1642 it was sold to the Morgils, who got it made free. A female heir of this family by marriage brought it to sir Edward Minshall, of Minshall, in Cheshire, whose grandson Edward sold it with other messuages and tenements to the honourable Richard Hill, by whom they were devised to his nephew, sir Rowland Hill, of Hawkstone.

Ann Cureton held the Wood-end Hall as tenant sixty years. She died here March 10th, 1743, above ninety-eight years old, having nearly accomplished her desire of living to an hundred.

Near the road to Wood-end Hall to Prees sir Rowland Hill has another freehold estate purchased by his uncle, I suppose of the Minshalls, who had it from the Morgils, but before it came to them it belonged to the Pestrals, a very ancient and flourishing family, which has produced several knights. Sir Richard Pestral was a witness to a chart of William le Boteler, baron of Wem, dated at Wem in the year 1356.

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The Lanes in Cotton.

A little further on the same road is a copyhold messuage and estate of Mr. William Tyler. At the survey this estate with other lands belonging to Randle Hinton, his grandson, as is most probable sold them to Mr. George Tyler, who is said to have had one hundred pounds per annum in Cotton and Edstaston.

Hinton's estates seem to have been of that value. Tyler was in possession of them in 1642; how much sooner I cannot tell. He had two sons, John and George, who when the war broke out engaged on different sides. John the chavalier had the misfortune to be taken prisoner, and sent to Shrewsbury goal. John has been succeeded here by three Williams, in a direct line.

THE LANES IN COTTON.

Yocking's lane from Quino brook to Cotton wood. Cotton lane from the finger-post near Wood-end hall towards Prees.

Crew lane from Cotton lane by Crew hall to Cotton wood.

Moor lane from Cotton lane beyond Mr. Tyler's house towards Pepper-street.

Hill lane from Cotton pinfold to the Bank-house.

Fenton's lane from the Hall formerly Mr. Ward's to Cotton wood.

The Name, Boundaries, Extent, Soil, and Valuation of Lowe and Ditches.

LOWE AND DITCHES.

The Name, Boundaries, Extent, Soil, and Valuation of Lowe and Ditches.

THE bulk of this township takes it name from Lits situation. For it is situated on an eminence. or rise of gound: and Low in Saxon signifies a little hill, whence the tumuli, or mounts which the Danes raised over the dead bodies of their famous men. were called Lowes. There is nothing more usual in the change of the a into o; thus what the Saxons call stanes, we pronounce stones, and what they call Hallywell, we pronounce Hollywell. It being not commonly known that Low signifies a hill, common use joins both together, and gives the houses on the eminence the name of the Lowe hill. name Ditches was probably taken from some remarkable fosses, or ditches, of which there are no plain remains, nor certain tradition. This township is bounded on the north by Newton, Northwood, and Edstaston, on the east by Edstaston, on the south by Wem, and on the west by Horton. a measured mile and a half in length from north to south. The breadth from the Cross Bank in Edstaston to sir Rowland Hill's farm in Horton is six furlongs.

The soil is generally a reddish clay, or marl, with a small mixture of earth, and in some places of sand. It is about a foot deep, and is equally fit for

The Lord's Demesne in this Township.

tillage, or pasture. It produces all sorts of grain, but suits best with wheat. The common manure is marl, muck, and lime, but of the last no great quantities are used. There is plenty of marl, and with this manure the land will bear excellent barley, peas, and oats.

In respect to the land-tax this township is valued at one hundred and forty pounds per annum, so that at four shillings in the pound the assignment is twenty-eight pounds.

THE LORD'S DEMESNE IN THIS TOWNSHIP.

In 1651 the lord's lands were held by Allanson, Thurleigh, and Whitfield.

John Allanson was the lord's bailiff, and receiver of his rents. In his hands were a curious house and yard, with about three hundred acres of land belong ing to it, a cottage and yard near Northwood, with eleven acres belonging thereto, and ten acres and a half in other places.

John Thurleigh held six closes, of which, one was called the Wind-mill croft, because a wind-mill then stood in it; another, Drake field, because it

lay up to Drake lane; a third, Balcroft, adjoining to the road to Horton on the south, and the Windmill croft on the north, a fourth lying between the said road on the north, and the house of Thomas Twyford, (Dytcher's hall) on the south. The other two need not be described, being small meadows.

Richard Whitfield held at the will of the lord fifteen butts of land, called St John's Furlong, because it anciently belonged to the chapel of St. John at the west-end of Wem. At the suppression of the said chapel the lord Dacre begged, bought, or at least seized this part of its endowment. From this chapel two fine pastures parcel of the the Rector's glebe are still called the Chapel fields.

THE PRINCIPAL ESTATES IN THIS TOWNSHIP, 1752.

The Ditches hall, as it was called when the Twyfords lived here, is a large timber house by tenure
copyhold, as are the barns and other out-buildings,
and one half of the estate. The other half is freehold. The Twyfords had the title of gentlemen.
Thomas, Richard, and Thomas succeeded in a direct
line. The last of them died 1603. In 1622, George
Kylvert was in possession of this estate. His son
Richard Kylvert, gentleman, died 1644. About

this time Thomas Barnes, of the Lowe, purchased it, and in 1658, gave it to John Edwards, of Nesse, a strange gentleman, as a portion with his daughter Dorothy, my mother-in-law. About 1663, Mr. Edwards sold it to Mr. Basnet, of Ruyton, whose son Roger married for his first wife, Ann Pay, of Wem. and for his second, Martha Donn, of the Lowe. By his first wife, on whose issue by him the estate was settled, he had only a daughter Elizabeth, who first married Richard Tyler, of Horton, by whom she had two daughters; and afterwards one Longford, of Ellesmere, by whom she had a son. minor, is admitted to the copyhold, and the freehold belongs to the daughters, one of which, has married Mr. William Basnet, her uncle by the father's side.

James Forgham, of Wem, butcher, has a small copyhold estate at the Lowe, which has been in the family about ninety years.

Mr. William Basnet, of the new House, in Edstaston, has the estate which lately belonged to the Downs, an ancient family, now extinct. At the time of the survey 1561, it was copyhold, in the possession of Randle Downs. Richard his grandson gave £5. to the school at Wem in 1651, and about the same time got his estate enfranchised by Onslow and Playters. Samuel, son of Richard, was at first

Pр

a wild libertine, but at length taking up, became a rigid Presbyterian. Richard, son of Samuel, died of the small pox, unmarried, and before his father, who thereupon settled twenty-three pounds per annum, being his whole estate in Lowe, on his daughter Basnet and her issue, and seven pounds per annum, being land in Edstaston, called Donn's Breeches, on his three grand-daughters.

Pyms farm is freehold. The messuage formerly faced the road, very near the Donn's; but the present house lies a little backward in the fields. In 1661, this estate was part of the lord's demesne, and then in the hands of the lord's bailiff. Mr. Allan-He or his son probably purchased it, for it was in the possession of his grandson William at the beginning of the civil war. In those times of confusion one Pym was pursued, and murdered in a field, then covered with birches and other trees, a little below the house. He was not the owner, but the tenant of this farm, which is likely to carry his name, when that of all the ancient Landlords is forgotten. In the reign of Charles II. Francis Allanson, son of William above, sold this estate to one Hesketh, the lord's agent, and he afterwards to Thomas Jobb, of Wem, mercer, who built there a good brick house, the old one being ruinous above oae hundred years before. In 1695, Mr. Jebb sold the estate to Mr. William Smith, a Londoner, and

in 1700 Mr. Smith sold it to Job Orton, of Shrewsbury, grocer, whose son the Presbyterian teacher in that town has added nine pounds per annum to it. In this farm there is a remarkable well, from which twenty-three acres of land formerly took the name of the Well field, a name still retained by two pastures of it.

Taylor's copyhold messuage and estate lie on the other side the road. At the time of the survey 1561, they belonged to John Pay. In 1642, Richard Pay was in possession of them, His son John was one of the plaintiffs against Mr. Wycherley in 1673. The expense of that suit, and the bankruptcy of Mr. Samuel Smith, of Wem, mercer, in 1676 reduced him to the necessity of selling his estate to the Taylors. The widow of John Taylor is now in possession of it. The revenue of it belongs to one Price, son of Taylor's sister.

At a small distance John Barnes, esq. has a large freehold estate, and a pleasant seat, by himself much improved. The garden is entirely of his own designing; the plan is well drawn, and executed at a great expense. The canals are large, and well filled with water. The green walks are neat, the shady walk so well contrived, that the boughs meet above, and form a continued arch.

Baron was the ancient name of this family, which settled here very early. 1489. In 5th Henry VII. William Baron, of the Lowe, was of the Homage extra barram, or country jury. 1516. In the reignof queen Elizabeth, Thomas Baron, who is sometimes called Barnes, was of the jury that surveyed all the estates in this lordship. Three years afterwards he was of the jury, 1564, that enquired into, and settled the customs of this manor. John Barnes, son of the said Thomas, was buried December 28th, 20th James I.

Thomas, son of John, born in 1506, on the 20th of June, 1688, married Dorothy, daughter of John Moody, of the Pool Head, by whom he had three sons and four daughters. Before the civil war began, he resigned a great part of his estate to his eldest son Thomas, having built the Folly for the residence of himself and wife, where he died in 1658. widow survived ten years. On a Sunday evening about 1721, a thunderbolt fell on this structure, and shattered several parts of it in a surprizing At present there are no remains of it, but manner. the cellar. In 1650, sir Thomas Adams chose Thomas Barnes, the elder, and Thomas Barnes, the younger, both then living at the Lowe, feoffees with others of the school he had just founded at Wem, to which they gave twenty-five pounds.

Thomas, the younger, was born in 1614: April 23rd 1631, he married Elizabeth daughter to Richard Higginson, of Creamore, by whom he had two sons and one daughter; in 1642, he collected asubsidy, being the last to which the royal assent was given, by the first charter in the allotments of Wem, Prees, Shawbury, and Whitchurch. The estate of the Ditches was bought by him, and he gave it as a portion with his daughter. He built that part of the house at the Lowe which contains the kitchen. hall &c. 1635: and the other half which contains the large parlour &c. 1654. He sensibly felt the miseries of the civil war, his house being frequently plundered, and himself carried prisoner to Shrawardine His consideration money was £100, and when the Shropshire gentlemen compounded for their estates, he was obliged to pay £50. He died in 1668, his widow survived him thirty-five years, for she died at Great Ness, in 1703.

John his eldest son dying young, Thomas became his heir, who January 26th, 1671; married Lucy, daughter of—Lloyd, of Houghton in the county Flint, Esq. by whom he has issue, one son, This Thomas farmed of Dr. Aldrich, all the tithes and profits of the rectory of Wem; on the marriage of his son he retired to Chester in 1702, where he died in 1709, and was buried at Wem, February 23rd, in the same year. His son John married Elizabeth,

daughter of Edward Foden, esq. barrister at law, and recorder of Stafford; he was buried, August 14th. 1722, leaving two sens in their minority; of which Thomas the youngest died of a fall from his horse, January 14th, 1750. John the eldest, married Edizabeth, the beautiful heiress of Mr. Whitehead, of Hadley in the county of Salep, by whom he had only one daughter, Elizabeth. In 1561 Mr. Barnes's estate was copyhold, but before the restoration it was enfranchised by Platers and Onslow.

On the read from the Lowe to Whixall, there are now three tenements, but formerly only two, (viz.) Webb's and Whitfield's; which were then copyhoid, but are now free. William Webb was of the jury in 1561, and then was proprietor of the first of these tenements: 1623, it was in the possession of William Pelton, who for this, and another estate in Horton, was charged eight shillings towards the subsidy paid in 1642: his son had the title of gentleman; being brought up to the law, he was employed by the borough-holders and copy-holders of Wem, 1673, to manage their suit against Mr. Wycherley, who 1680, found means to corrupt and bribe him to betray his trust, and secret and suppress the copies, writings, and evidences which they had put into his hands. This man afterwards sold his estate to the lord chancelor Jeffreys, and so it has since gone along with the barony and manor of Wem. It is at present held by Mr. Barns, as lying up to his own estate.

Roger Whitfield, ancestor of all the Whitfields in these parts, was of the jury of survey 1561, and was then possessed of a large estate, which in times past had belonged to the Cadmans. One of his descendants sold the greatest part of it to Mr. Barnes. of the Lowe; the remainder continued in the family much longer, for Catherine, widow of Thomas Whitfield, was charged towards the subsidy in 1642, and Roland, her son, gave 20s. to Wem School, in 1651. Soon after this he sold his estate to steward Jebb. who got it enfranchised with several others, but Mr. Richard Jebb, grandson of the steward, once a mercer in Wem, and now curate of Whixall, sold it to Mr. Richard Lawrence of Wem, the present occupier. The farthest tenement borders on Northwood, and belongs to Mr. Barnes, of the Lowe; the tenure was changed from copyhold to freehold, at the same time that the rest of the estates were enfranchised.

HORTON.

The Boundaries, Extent, Tenure Soil, and Valuation of Horton.

Horton, a name which the antiquaries do not explaine, this is a mile from Wenn: it is bounded on the North by Newtown, on the east by the Lowe and Ditches, on the south by the pool hands of Wem, and

The Principal Inhabitants of Horton, for the last 200 Years.

Penceford brook; and on the west by Wolverley. It is near a measured mile in length, from Goborn's moat to Penceford brook; its breadth is much the same, from the pool land in Wem, to the township of Newtown. All the estates in it are copyhold, except that which belonged to the Chettoes, which was enfranchised by Platers and Onslow. The soil is deep, marl is the principal manure, and wheat is the favourite grain. In respect to the landtax, this township is valued at £120. 1s. 4d.

THE PRINCIPAL INHABITANTS.

The Husseys had one of the largest estates here about the middle of the 16th. century. Catherine, widow of Thomas, was possessed of it at the time of the survey in 1561. One of her descendants sold it, and purchased that which now belongs to Mr. Higginson, of Whitchurch. Mr. Hussey lived here at the beginning of the civil war.

The Moodies were the next considerable family. William Moody was of the jury of survey, in 1562. He had three Messuages, and a cottage on his estate. The principal messuage stood between the present house of Mr. Leighton, and Andrew Morris's; when this was taken down, part of it was added to the house on the bank, opposite to Mr. Higginson's. William, son of the above William, was concerned in a suit against the Countess of Arundel. His son

The Principal Inhabitants of Horton, for the last 200 Years.

John, enjoyed the estate during the civil war, and was a benefactor to the school. William, son of John, was one of the Plaintiffs against Mr. Wycherley, 1673, and was ruined by that and perhaps some other misfortunes; he sold his estate to John Chettoe in 1693.

The Chettoes, or Chetwalls, bore a great sway in this town, 1561; at the time of the survey John Chetwall was settled at the messuage now belonging to Mrs. Leighton. His son William, 1622, was one of the defendants against the Countess of Arundel, and paid to the subsidy just before the beginning of the civil war, 1642. William was succeeded by his two sons, John and Edward, both tanners; John the eldest was a benefactor to the school of Wem, and Edward to the church. widow of this enjoyed the estate until 1702. John Chettoe, her eldest son, purchased several estates, made a great figure, contracted many debts, and by his being made a bankrupt ruined many people. William, his eldest son, bred up to the law, being surety for his father, was forced to fly to the West Indies. It is remarkable how this family varied their surname: at first it was Chitwall, afterwards Chetall, and at last Chettoe.

The Tylers had a very good estate here; their house was north of the Chettoes', but is now re-

The principal Inhabitants of Morton for the last 200 Years.

moved to Wem, near the Free-school. Tyler was settled here towards the beginning of the 16th century: Joan, his widow, was in possession of his messuage and lands at the time of the survey; William, their son, was then of the jury, and had purchased another messuage and estate in this town. from one Iveson. Adam, son of William, was one of the defendants, 1622, brought by the Countess of Arundel, relating to lands near the old Pool. Richard, son of Adem, was killed by a party of soldiers that plundered his house, 1644. His son William was a benefactor to Wem school, 1651. Richard, son of this William, contributed towards the rebuilding of Wem church, 1676. William. son of Richard, commonly called Farmer Tyler, was obliged to sell the estate to pen his debts.

The Altins or Allens were a considerable family here, they inhabited the house that Andrew Morris now does. Bichard was of the juny of survey; his son John succeeded him in 1596, and in 1622 was a defendant against the Countess of Anundelt Richard, son of John, paid to the subsidy in 1642, was a benefactor to the school at Wem in 1651, and one of the plaintiffs against Mr. Wycherley in 1676, and surviving his son John, died in 1685. His grandson Richard, was born in 1675, (in which year his father died) educated at Wem.school, chosen Fellow of Sidney College, Cambridge, where he died

The principal Estates in Horton in 1752,

about 1750, remarkable for his great learning, and his attachment to the Arian Heresy. The greatest part of his estate he sold to Andrew Morris, sen. about 1715. In the 17th century, the Peats, Higginsons, and Hanners were the principal inhabitants and proprietors of estates in Horton.

THE PRINCIPAL ESTATES, IN 1762.

Mr. Barnes, of the Lowe, has an estate in Horton, containing thirty acres of land; it formerly belonged to the Goldborns', but at the time of the sutvey to his ancestor, Thomas Baron: even then there was no house on it, but the scite of one is very visible, for it was moated about 36 yards long, and 17 broad; three-parts of the moat remain, and tradition says; that the house, when standing, was called Horton Hall.

Sir Rowland Hill, of Hawkstone, has an estate framed out of the Tylers's and Moodies'; the messuage is in the Green-lane, and at the time of the survey belonged to Catharine Hussey; in 1642, to Thomas Peat, who died in 1655; in 1673 to Randal Hanmer, who at his death divided his estate between his two sons, David and Edward. David had this messuage and appurtenances, and Edward of the Brim, the lands belonging to a demolished

The principal Estates in this Township.

house east of the Slaters. These brothers having no issue, left their respective shares to their nephew Farmer Tyler, who sold 40l. per annum to the Hon. Richard Hill; and the assignees of Mr. Chettoe sold him 16l. per annum more. Original rent 60l.

Mrs. Leighton, of Shrewsbury, has the most considerable estate in this township, being the Chettoes entire, and part of the Moodies', with the messuages belonging to both. In 1733, Mrs. Leighton, of Rodenhurst, in the parish of Rodington, purchased the premises of the assignees of Mr. John Chettoe, and by will left them to her daughter, the present owner. Rent 1201.

Andrew Morris's estate was purchased by his father about 1715, being the greatest part of what formerly belonged to the Allens; it is all they were possessed of in the township of Horton, for the Pool lands lie in Wem, and the reversion of them was bought by Mr. Basnet, then of the Ditches. Andrew Morris is the only considerable inhabitant in this town, he lives on his own estate, all the other farms are in the hands of tenants. Rent 301.

Mr. Higginson, of Whitchurch, has the messuage and estate which was formerly the Adeneys, next the Husseys, and then the Adeneys again, who conveyed it to Richard Pay, of Wem, timber-merchant, The principal Estates in this Township.

about 1703, at which time it was settled on Mr. Higginson, ironmonger, who had married Pay's daughter. Richd. Higginson, their son, is now in possession of it, also of Felton's estate which his father purchased, together with part of Tyler's which he purchased himself. Rent 401.

Mr. Slator, of Moreton Corbet, has the messuage and estate which seems to have been the property of Robert Menlove at the time of the survey; of Mr. Richard Higginson at the time of the civil war; of Edward Tyler before the restoration; of his son Adam from that period to near the time of his death in 1677, about which time it was sold to the Slators, who have made great additions to this estate. Rent 461.

THE COMMON FIELDS, IN 1561.

There were four belonging to Horton, viz. 1st. Homon, Homore, Holmor, or Holman Field, (for so many ways it is written) was near to the Old Pool of Wem, at least on that side of the town.—2d. Gronow, Grannow, or Granno Field, did lie between the town and Northwood Hall.—3d. Sindorns, Sinders, or Sinder Field, extended on both sides of the road to Wolverley, but chiefly north of it.—4th. Ryley Field, was situate north-west of Moor Lane, not

The principal Botaton, doc. in this Yourship.

far from Penceford Brook. This was also called the Little Field, because it was of much less compass than any of the other three.

THE LANES OF HORTON.

The Green Lane, from Evans's, the Weaver's house, to Golborn's Cross, near the Smith's shop.—Drake Lane, from the Green Lane to the Ditches.—Moor Lane, from the road to Wolverley to Pool Lands.—Ryley Lane, from the road to Wolverley to Penceford Bridge.

THE LORD'S DEMESNE IN HORTON, 1561.

Two Crofts called Nicoll's Breech, two acres.—Black Croft Meadow, two acres.—The Lord's Meadow, seven acres.

THE WITCH OF HORTON.

The Witch of Horton was much talked of formerly, but now is almost forgotten; as such, the following account, I trust, will be acceptable to our readers, being the original:—About fifty years ago, an unlucky boy, servant to Thomas Newns, who

The Witch of Horton.

lived where Brown does now, took into his head to hide his masters plough irons, and to give out that they were conveyed away by witchcraft. The credulity of the people, and the success he at first met with, encouraged him to attempt greater wickedness, even to set the house on fire. Mr. Hughes, then Curate of Wem, being desired to pray in the family that was disturbed, after he had done his office, called for his horse, whereupon the boy came running to acquaint them that the Parsons saddle was gone. Mr. Hughes was positive that the witch had no power over it, because he had honestly paid for it, and therefore caused a diligent search to be made for the saddle, which was found secreted in the hay loft. This caused the boy to be very much suspected. He was taken before Mr. Hill, of Soulton, and by the Justice and Clergy of Wem, brought to a full confession. The house of correction and a whipping were the punishment of this misdemeanor.

NEWTOWN.

The Houndaries, Extent, Tenure Soil, and Valuation of Newtown.

IEWTOWN or Newton, was so called, because it was new in comparison to several other towns in the neighbourhood; yet it is older than

" e principal Estates in this Township.

Northwood. The first time I find it mentioned is in 1373, 47th Edward III. it was then a manor, and was so called at the survey in 1561. Thomas Bromehall, tenet libre de domino Regis hujus manerii, ut de manerio suo de Ne otone, &c.

On the north it is bounded by Northwood, on the east by the Lowe, on the south by Horton and Wolverley. From east to west it is a mile in length, from north to south about half a mile in breadth. The soil is ebb, consisting chiefly of clay; it bears all sorts of grain, but agrees best with wheat and oats, especially the latter. Muck and Marle are the common manure. In respect to the Land-tax, this township is valued at £126 6s. 8d. per annum, so that 1s. in the pound, the assessment is £6 6s. 8d.

THE PRINCIPAL ESTATES, IN 1752.

Northwood Hall took its name from the wood that was formerly near it. It was freehold in 1561, and then in the possession of Thomas Bromhall. Perhaps it had been the seat of Horde, a great man in this township, who by telony forfeited his estate in the latter end of the reign of Edward III. However that be, the family of the Bromhall's has been reported one of the best in the parish of Wem. In the reign of Charles I. Sir Richard Newport, High Steward of the Manor of Wem, under the Earl of

The principal Estates in this Township.

Arundel, made Thomas Bromhall, gent. his deputy, whence it appears that he was brought up to the law. for at that time the steward was judge in this Manor, and tried several causes at every great Court Leet. Thomas was succeeded in a direct line by John. Thomas, and William; John died in 1672, Thomas in 1678, William in 1709. William was warden of Fleet prison, and had the custody of the palace of Westminster; but notwithstanding he enjoyed this gainful office, he contracted so great debts that he was forced to sell it, and in 1692, (4th William and Mary) an act passed for the sale of the interest which his son Thomas, an infant, had in the premises. This Thomas was possessed of Northwood Hall in 1713, but in that, or next year he sold it to Mr. Francis Butter, an attorney at law, in Drayton, and Mr. Butter soon after sold it again to Richard Wollaston, esq. receiver of the land-tax. The old Hall was built within the square moat, which is still kept open; but the old Hall having been long demolished, another was erected without the moat, part of which has been taken down and neatly rebuilt of brick, by the present owner, who in several respects has made great improvements.

The next Farm, towards the chapel, formerly belonged to the Newtons, who probably took their name from this town, and so were of long standing here. John Newton was the proprietor of it in 1561,

The principal Retates in this Township.

when this estate was reckoned among the copyholds, but it is freehold now. Four generations successively succeeded him until 1696, when Thos. Newton was stabbed to death at Burlton, by Hesketh, of Kenwick Park; after which, Mr. Wm. Blakemore married his widow, on whom the estate was settled for life. The reversion was in John Newton, brother to the deceased, who sold it to Edwd. Lloyd, of Lacon, esq. about 1721. Blakemore having committed waste on the premises, was forced to resign his title in order to compound the matter.

At a small distance William Donn had a large copyhold estate, and was of the jury of survey in 1561. Before the civil war, Francis Higginson had a moiety in it; and before the restoration it was all enfranchised and sold to Mr. Thomas Jenks, of Shrewsbury, goldsmith, who, in 1668, built the present half timber house. He also bought of Samuel Heneage, gent. who was a benefactor to the church of Wenn in 1677, another estate; the messuage of which stood beyond the chapel, near to the brook; this formerly belonged to William Newans; from him or his son it passed by purchase to the Masons, gentlemen; from them by marriage to the Hencages. Thomas Jenks, above-mentioned, has an excellent character on his monument; he died of a fever in the 53rd year of his age, in the year 1683. Thomas, his nephew, succeeded him; he

The principal Estates in this Township.

was Vicar of Wibunbury, in the county of Chester, and died of a fever in the spirits, occasioned by excessive fatigue in preaching three days together. His son Thomas, the worthy steward of the Duke of Bridgewater, sold the messuage beyond the chapel, and joined the land to his other estate. In 1751 he resigned both to his son Thomas, and was buried at Newtown in 1762.

Near to the chapel is an old brick messuage, which, with the copyhold estate belonging to it in 1561, was in the possession of Robert Cowper, one of the jury of survey, and seems to have continued with his posterity until about the time of the civil war, when it was purchased by Mr. Richard Jebb; this gentleman being an attorney at law, was at first recorder, and in 1655, deputy steward of Wem. All the estates he purchased, which were many, he got enfranchised. Having otherwise provided for his son, he settled his estate on his daughter Ursula, married to Benjamin Wright, of Wellington, afterwards of Namptwich, mercer, who has been long dead, but his widow is still living in a very advanced age.

A little beyond the chapel is the messuage which lately belonged to the Hintons; the estate was copyhold at the time of the survey, and then in the possession of William Hinton, (father Allan, of

Newtown Chapel.

Edstaston), according to whose account of particulars, it consisted only of fifteen acres; but it has been since augmented to 108 acres out of the lands of Thomas Sturry, esq. the Payns, the Jebs, &c. In 1658, William Hinton, great-grandson of William above-mentioned, procured the enfranchisement of all the estates he then was possessed of. His son William caused the stone bridge to be built over the brook near the house. John, son of the last William, in 1748, sold to me the whole estate for £1400. and I have added to it fourteen acres, called the great Shaws, formerly part of Jebb's estate, which I had long ago purchased of Mr. Goodall, of Namptwich.

THE CHAPEL OF NEWTOWN.

The inhabitants of Newton, Wolverley, and Northwood, being at a great distance from the Parish Church, agreed to have a Chapel of Ease: for this purpose they purchased a private house, fitted it up after a decent manner, and procured a Minister, to whom Mr. Parsons, then Minister of Wem, gave a considerable stipend. This was done at the end of the civil war, but I cannot discover precisely the year. The register of Wem mentions the baptism of a child in Newtown Chapel April 17, 1659. The restoration of the King and of Episcopal government, occasioned new difficulties; for preach-

ing here would not be allowed until the Chapel was consecrated; and Hackell, then bishop of the diocese, refused to consecrate that which was not endowed. In 1665, the Owners of estates consented to settle £10. per annum on a Minister, and charged that sum upon their lands for ever. In 1754, £200. of Queen Ann's bounty fell by lot to this chapel, which has since been laid out in the purchase of freehold lands.

It is remarkable that Andrew Barton who was the last person who was born here when it was a private house, was the first person that was buried here when it became a consecrated chapel, viz. November 10, 1666.

Mr. Francis Chambre, of Wolverley Hall, left 40s. per year for the repair of this Chapel, but if no repairs are wanting, then to the third school-master of Wem.

COPY OF THE CONSECRATION DEED.

In the name of God, Amen. Whereas, several honest and discreet persons, being inhabitants of the village of Newtown, Wolverley, and Northwood, within the Parish of Wem, Archdeacoury of Salop, and Diocese of Lichfield and Coventry, being mov-

ed by the Spirit of Ged, and out of pious and religious considerations, at their own proper costs and charges, have built and erected a Chapel within the said Parish, containing within the walls in length, from east to west, fifty-four feet; and in breadth twenty feet, or thereabouts; and have also sufficiently adorned the same with a holy table, font, bulpit, one audible bell, convenient seats, and all other things requisite and belonging to Divine Worship, have humbly besought us, that we, by our Episcopal and ordinary power and authority, would separate the said Chapel from all secular and civil uses, and dedicate, convert, and consecrate the same to pious and divine uses. We, John, by Divine Providence, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, taking into our favourable consideration their pious requests and desires, and proceeding to the consetration of the aforesaid new erected Chapel, by the aforesaid Episcopal authority, the said Chapel from all secular and profane uses for ever do separate, and only to Divine Worship and the celebration of Divine Offices do for ever dedicate and assign the same. And further, by the same Episcopal ordinary and authority, We grant for us, and our successors, license and liberty for the celebration of Divine Worship, by public prayers and saying the Liturgy according to the Church of England, for the sincere preaching of the Word of God, for the administration of the blessed Sacraments of Baptism and the

holy Eucharist in the same, for the solemnizing of matrimony, and the public churching of women after child-birth, the instructing and catechising of youth, burial of the dead, and to perform all things else, which in other Churches and Chapels may and are accustomed to be done.

And also, We, for us and our successors, and our Vicars in spiritual things, grant free liberty, as well to the Minister (named and appointed by the aforesaid inhabitants of Newtown, Wolverley, and Northwood, and also approved by us,) of doing and preforming the premises, as also to the said inhabitants of Newtown, Wolverley, and Northwood, of hearing and receiving the same. And we, the said Chapel of Ease, under the Parochial Church of Wem, as the Mother Church, as much as in us lies, by Divine right, the Canons of the Church, and good laws of the kingdom, to the honour of God and sacred use of the said inhabitants, do, for the future, consecrate by the name of the said Chapel of the blessed Charles, king and martyr, in Newtown, in the Parish of Wem, and we openly and publicly pronounce and declare, that being thus consecrated, it do for ever remain, and that by the name of the Chapel of the blessed martyred king in all succeeding times it be for ever called. And we do, as much as in us lies, endow the same with all rights and privileges belonging to any other Chapel of Ease by these presents. Provided it be not prejudicial to and reserv-

ing to the Parochial Church of Wem, as the Mother Church, and the Minister of the same, all fruits, rights, privileges, ordinary and extraordinary, to the Mother Church and its Minister within the precincts and limits of the aforesaid villages of Newtown, Wolverley, and Northwood, of right or custom any way belonging or appertaining, in as ample form and manner as they were due and usually paid before our consecration of the said Chapel, and no otherwise.

And we further grant to the inhabitants of Newtown, Wolverley, and Northwood, for the time being, full power and authority, by these presents, from time to time, to name a fit Minister for the aforesaid Chapel, to serve in Divine offices, to be approved and licensed by us or our successors, or Vicar general in spiritual things, which Minister or Chaplain must be at least bachelor of arts, and the aforesaid inhabitants of Newtown, Wolverley, and Northwood, shall equally levy and assess the sum of £10. of lawful money of England, to be paid quarterly, as a stipend to the said Minister or Chaplain, at the Feast of the Nativity of Christ, the Annunciation of the blessed Virgin, the nativity of St. John the Baptist, and the Feast of St. Michael the Archangel, by equal portions for ever; to the which taxation or payment, we the present inhabitants of the aforesaid villages of Newtown, Wolverley, and Northwood, in the presence of God, and in the

presence of -, as his Minister, by subscribing our names and fixing our seals to a certain schedule now remaining in our register, have obliged ourselves and the succeeding dwellers and inhabitants of the villages of Newtown, Wolverley, and Northwood, respectively for ever; which aforesaid Minister or Chaplain shall receive and take all oblations. fees. and profits, from all and singular persons in the chapelry, for all marriages, churchings, and burials in the chapel or chapel and vard, equally, according as they are usually paid in such cases to the Minister or Rector of Wem, in right or custom. And if it shall so happen (which God avert) at any time for the future, through the fault or negligence of the aforesaid inhabitants of Newtown, Wolverley, and Northwood, that there shall be wanting a fit Minister, for the space of six months, to celebrate Divine Service in the said Chapel, then we reserve power to us and our successors, Bishops of Lichfield and Coventry, or in our absence to our Vicar general in spiritual things, to name and impose (for that time only) a fit Minister or Chaplain for the aforesaid Chapel, to supply the negligence of the said inhabitants, which said Chaplain so imposed shall receive and take the aforesaid stipend of ten pounds, and all other rights and profits belonging to the said Chapel and due to his place, in as ample form and manner as if he had been named by the inhatants. And further our will is, that from time to

time, there be provided amongst the said inhabitants one that can read, to assist and attend the said Minister in performing Divine offices, who also shall take care for the seasonable ringing of bells, do all other things that belong to a Parish Clerk or Sexton; and our will is, that he have an yearly stipend paid to him, by the said inhabitants, equal to that which the Parish Clerk or Sexton of Wem do now receive, with all other profits for marriages, burials. or any other occasional offices whatsoever: which said stipend shall be equally levied among the said inhabitants, according to the Ecclesiastical laws and canons of this kingdom. And we further will, that the said inhabitants of Newtown, Wolverly, and Northwood, do successively and alternatively choose yearly two wardens, to be presented and sworn at our visitation, faithfully to execute the said office, who, according to the canons of the Church and at the cost of the said inhabitants equally levied, shall, from time to time, decently and sufficiently adorn and repair the same, and carefully provide books, and all other utensils, for the celebration of Divine Worship, and the Sacraments, and also to see and take care that the Minister, Clerk, and Sexton are duly paid, and that all offences against the Ecclesiastical canons be duly presented to us or our Archdeacon, or other our officers. Provided always, that neither matrimony shall be solemnized, nor either of the sacraments administered or conferred on any

but only the inhabitants of the said respective villages of Newtown, Wolverley, and Northwood, without special license, from us or our officers, first had and obtained. And lastly, we reserve full power to us and our successors, Bishops of Lichfield and Coventry, by themselves, their commissioners and substitutes, to visit the said chapel, and exercise such jurisdiction as we do in other churches and chapels within our said diocese. And as to all others the premises, we do for us and our successors, Bishops of Lichfield and Coventry, as much as in us lies, and by that authority we enjoy, ratify, establish, and confirm the same for ever, by these presents.

Dated at Newtown, the 7th day of June, in the year of our Lord, 1665, and in the fourth year of our consecration. John Lichfield and Coventry.

THE CHAPLAINS OF NEWTOWN.

1655.—Robert Smith seems to have been the first minister of Newtown; what his settled stipend was is not known, but he had a considerable allowance from Mr. Parsons, then rector of Wem. In 1662, he removed from this curacy to that of Edstaston; and in 1674 to that of Wem.

1665.—Mr. Cartwright is reputed his successor at Newtown, after a vacancy of three years. Mr.

The Chaplains of Newtown.

Hughes could not live on the rectory of Wem, and so would not spare any thing for this chapel. Mr. Wycherley being in the same circumstances, the case was not at all mended under him: for this reason Mr. Cartwright was glad to accept of the third school at Wem, his stipend of ten pounds per ann. not affording a sufficient subsistence. In 1674, he was made curate of Edstaston. The name of his successor at Newtown is entirely forgotten.

1680.—Francis Williams met with great encouragement; the generous Dr. Aldrich allowed him thirty pounds per annum, and the inhabitants added forty shillings, so that his annual income from this place was forty-two pounds a year. See head Schoolmasters of Wem.

1701.—Lawrence Gardner succeeded him with the same allowance; but next year he was removed to Wem. See Curates of Wem.

1711.—Thomas Cook had been long curate of St. Chads, Salop, was thence removed to Wem, and from there to Newtown: Dr. Chandler took five pounds per year from his stipend to augment that of Mr. Gardner. Mr. Cook was a personable man, had married a good fortune, and by the interest of his wife's relations, was soon preferred to the vicarage of Leighton, and in 1718 to the rectory of Sela-

The Chaplains of Newtown.

tin, near Oswestry; for these livings he gave bonds of resignation: at last Henry, Earl of Bradford, presented him to the vicarage of Stottesden, near Bridgenorth, where he ended his days about 1737.

1718.—Thomas Blakeway, the next curate of Newtown, had only twenty pounds per annum allowed him by Mr. Eyton; he was the eldest son of Robert Blakeway, of Wem, glaver; had his education at Wem school and Trinity College, Cambridge, was a great smoaker of tobacca, and one that took much delight in fishing and fewling. Upon some disgust given him by the inhabitants, he resigned this curacy, and returned to Norfolk, where he had been curate of Castlerising some years before He new settled at Sutton, near Yarmouth, and died there December 30, 1744, in the 50th year of his age.

1720.—George Tyler succeeded him at Newtown, and had the good fortune to please the people better; but at length carrying tales and enflaming the differences that had arisen between the rector and some of his parishioners, he was removed to Wem, and the twenty pounds per annum withdrawn, which Mr. Eyton had until then paid to the chaplains of Newtown.

1727.—Thomas of the Argot, in the parish of Kinnerley, held Newtown with Herdley.

The Charleins of Newtown.

1728.—Parry, who had been curate of Ellesmere, preached at Newtown, Petton, and Cockshut. He soon got the school at Newtown, adjacent to Baschurch; and in 1732, the vicarage of Nesse-Strange, otherwise Great Nesse.

1729.—Sutton, his successor here, was also a pluralist for he held Broughton together with this curacy. In 1632, he was arrested and carried to goal for forgery of some writing, when he sold Hadnall-Hall in right of his wife.

1732.---Salmon, school-master of Whitchurch, was a polite man, and had a good character; the inhabitants of this chapelry advanced him ten pounds a year, to engage him to preach twice every Sunday; but Marbury becoming vacant, he accepted of that curacy in December 1734, as being much nearer to Whitchurch. The excesses of a drunken wife threw him into a consumption, of which he died.

Swerton came in November, 1735; he had been dismissed from Calveral, where he was curate and school-master, on account of some misdemeanor; he preached twice a-day, and had twenty pounds per annum, till he got Hampton; after that only ten pounds was paid him. He was an odd mortal, and wretched divine. He got into Priests orders at Chester by a sham title, for which he was suspended

Redfellis Brook.

by Bishop Smallbroke, who before had rejected him for insufficiency.

1741.---George Tyler was elected chaplain again, being at the same time rector of Petton. In this year Queen Ann's bounty fell to him. He died January 14, 1747. See Curates of Wem.

1747.---Samuel Garbet, jun. my son, being too much fatigued with the duty of Wem church, was solicited to be their chaplain, by the principal inhabitants, in whom the election is vested. In 1750, he got the two hundred pounds of Queen Ann's bounty laid out in the purchase of freehold lands, for the benefit of himself and his successors in this curacy.

REDFELLIS BROOK.

This Brook has its rise in the Fens and Whixall Mosses; passes through Northwood, and enters Newtown with a copious stream in winter, and after hard rain overflows the adjacent meadows in summer. Opposite to my house, late Hinton's, is Shappeford, perhaps a corruption of Sheepford, over which there is a good stone bridge for horses; hence, this water takes its course below the chapel to Davis' Lane, where there is another stone bridge over it for horses, made this present year, 1752. Some pikes and eels are taken in it, but it does not abound with fish.

The Township of Wolverley,

WOLVERLEY.

The Boundaries, Extent, Tenure Soil, and Valuation of Wolverley.

OLFORDELEY, as it was written in the reign of Edward I. is of Saxon original; it took its name from its proprietor Wulfere or Wulphere, and the Saxon word leag, corrupted in ley, which signifies a field or pasture. Thus, Bromley, the name of a town, in modern English is Broomfield. township is bounded on the north by Northwood and Newtown, on the east by Horton, on the south by Loppington, on the west by Lineal, in the parish of Ellesmere. It is a mile and a half in length from Blackemore's Lynes to Dickin's house, near Blackford bridge, (but the school lands in Northwood intervene); the breadth of it is about a mile, from my orchard, late Hinton's, to the strinde that divides it from Loppington. The soil towards the east is chiefly clay, which suits best for wheat; the remainder, which is by far the greater part, is sandy, and produces excellent rye. Barley, peas and oats grow pretty well upon it; the common manure is muck and marle, with some lime. Along the strinde there are good meadows, but subject to be overflowed upon any sudden rain. The whole township is freehold, which tenure was obtained here about four hundred years ago. The free tenants in 1561, were Thomas Sturry, esq. Rewland Lacon, esq. John

The principal Estates in Wolverley.

Hochkiss who purchased of Sir Richard Mainwaring; John Chidlow, John Milward who purchased of John de Houghton, chaplain, as he had done of Richard Phillips, of Frankton. In respect to the Land-tax, this township is valued at near £138 per annum, which at 4s. in the pound, the assessment would be £27. 11s. 9d.

I find the Common fields of Wolverley mentioned in an ancient charter; but they have been so long enclosed that no account can be given of them.

THE PRINCIPAL ESTATES, IN 1753.

Wolverley-Hall in 1404, 32d Edward I. was in the possession of William de Wolfferdeley, to whom it came in succession from his father John. In 1561. it was the seat of Thomas Sturry, esq. who was still living in 1588. Before 1642, two farms were sold from this estate. About 1687, Mr. Richard Corbet, then a private gentleman in the horse guards, sold the reversion of Wolverley-Hall to Chancellor Jeffreys, for one thousand pounds; since that time it has gone along with the barony and manor of Wein. The shell of a domestic chapel, which is still preserved, shows that good families have lived here. In 1642, Richard Menlove, as tenant, was charged to the subsidy then raised. Soon after the Chambers settled in this place; Francis, who died in 1678, gave a silver cup for the use of Newtown chapel,

The principal Estates in Wolverley.

and charged forty shiflings per year on a piece of land near Penceford bridge, to keep the chapel in repair, or if no repairs should be wanting, to be paid to the third school-master of Wem.

The next messuage and estate belongs to Roger Acherley, of the Cross, in the parish of Ellesmere, gentleman. In the first Richard II. it seems to have been the estate of Hugh Phillips, of Frankton, who conveyed it to John Houghton, chaplain, and he to Richard Milward, whose son John was in possession of it in 1561. In 1642, Thomas Acherley was charged for it in the subsidy, and eight years after he was chosen one of the first feoffees of Wem school; he died in 1658, and was succeeded in this estate by his son Richard, gent. who purchased a good estate at Loppington, and another at Common Wood, in the same parish. Upon his death this tenement and another at Newtown devolved on a younger brother, Thomas, an ironmonger, first at Wrexham, afterwards at Wem, who sued the widow of the said Richard Acherley for the estates in the parish of Loppington, which she designed to leave him at her death, but being provoked by his ill usage, she bequeathed them to other relations, the Chancery having declared the fee to be in her. This Thomas left two sons; viz. Richard, for some time curate of Wellington, till he grew disordered in his mind; and Roger, the

The principal Estates in Welverley.

present owner, who married Mrs. Spencer, of the Cross, heiress of that estate, worth one hundred pounds per annum. In 1750, the house and outbuildings at Wolverley were burnt to the ground, but they are now rebuilt with brick and covered with tile.

Sir Rowland Hill, of Hawkstone, has an estate and messuage in this township, called the New-House, but part of both lies in Northwood. About thirty pounds per annun was purchased of John Goodall, of Namptwich, tallow-chandler, who bought it of John Wicksteed, of the same town, gentleman. It was part of the marriage portion which the said Wicksteed had with Mary, the daughter of Steward Jebb; and probably was one of the seven estates which belonged to Rowland Lacon, esq. at the time of the survey. The remainder of the New-House estate, above two-thirds of which are in Northwood, was bought by Sir Rowland Hill, of William Wicksteed, of Wem, grocer, who a little before had purchased it of one Brindley, of Wellington, taylor, It came to the Brindleys from the Menloves. Richard Menlove, an attorney, younger brother of William Menlove, of the Foxholes, lived here in the reign of Charles II. The estate was in that family before the civil war.

Near Wolverley bridge, over Redfellis brook, in

The principal Estates in Wolverley.

the messuage and estate of Rowland Wingfield, of Preston Brockhurst, esq. high sheriff of the county of Salop. At the survey in 1561, this estate belonged to John Chidlow, from whose family it passed to the Wilkinson's.

In 1642, Robert Wilkinson was charged to the subsidy then raised; in the civil war he was overseer of the fortifications of Wem; in 1650, he was chosen one of the feoffees of the free-school at Wem, to which he was a considerable benefacter, having contributed eleven pounds ten shillings; and in 1677, after the first fire at Wem, he gave five pounds towards rebuilding the church. In 1679, he was succeeded in this farm by his son Andrew, who sold it to the Wingfield's, from whom he had a lease of it. Robert, grand-son of this Andrew, is the present tenant,

On the other side of the road lately stood a messuage, appertaining to an estate, which at the survey in 1561, was Rowland Lacon's, esq. It was purchased by Steward Jebb, who settled it on his daughter Ursula and her husband, John Wicksteed, of Namptwich, gent. and by him it was sold to John Goodall, of the same place, who conveyed part of it to the Hon. Rowland Hill, esq. part to me, and the remainder to John Hinton, of Newtown. Hinton joining these lands to his estate of inheritance, sold the

The Township of Northwood.

house from the premises, and afterwards conveyed his whole estate to me.

Part of the original estate of the Wolfferdeleys and the Stanys, was in 1642, the property of Ellis's of Edstaston; from them, by marriage, it came to to the Paynes, who sold it to several persons; so that now it is divided between Arthur Dickin, of Lineal; Mr. Blakemore, of the Black Park, near Whitchurch; Rowland Wingfield, esq. and myself. Another part of the same estate was purchased by Steward Jebb, who annexed it to his estate at Newtown, and settled it on his daughter Mary, them married to Mr. Wright, of Wellington, mercer. She now lives at London, in a very advanced age. The messuage at Wolverley is pulled down, but it formerly stood beyond Herets.

NORTH WOOD.

The Boundaries, Extent, Soil, Tenure and Valuation of Northwood.

Wood that was formerly there, and its situation in respect to Lineal wood, which was south of it. The fall wood gave rise to the township, of which, I believe, no traces can be found before the reign of Henry VIII. In 1561, there were six small tenements and four cottages in it; the greatest part of

The Township of Northwood.

the wood was standing, a compice, the new Spring or Hagg coppice. It is bounded on the north by Betchfield moss and Whixall; the east by Edstasten: on the south by Low, Newtown, Wolverley and Lineal; on the West by Hampton, in the parish of Ellemere and Betchfield; in the county of Flint. Its length is a mile and a half from Edstaston to Betchfield musts; and its breadth a mile from the border of Wolverley to Whinall. There is a differthree of soil in different parts of it, the farm held by Mitshul, and some other grounds lying up to Wolverley, are sandy with a mixture of gravel, it suits best with tye; the rest of the township is covered with clay, which produces excellent wheat. sorts of soil furnish good pasture for cattle : lime, firm and muck are the usual manure. The tenure is freehold. In 1561, all the tenements were held at the will of the Lord of the Manor, except a cottage, with a croft adjoining, and two small tenements, which were then copyhold. In respect to the land-tax, this township is valued at £209. per annum, which at 1s. in the pound the assessment would be ten pounds nine shillings.

ESTATES BOUGHT BY THE ADAMS'S.

In 1561, Randal Adams held at the will of the lord of the manor; a messuage and four pieces of

The principal Estates in Northwood.

land lying together up to Blackford brook, inbink divides. Northwood from Flintshire; these, lands were then called Hazle Hurst, from a copping of hazles that had lately grown there; and from this Blurst, I suppose, the ford of the said brook is still called Blackhurst first. This Blandel being a not able man, as appears from his being chosen to be of the jury of survey, in all probability bought these and some other lands of Philip, Earl of Amandel. This was the first estate of the Adams's; the house belonging to it is that where Minshul now (1782) dwells. Randel had two sons, William, who sucreeded him in the estate at Northwood, and died in 1598; and Thomas, of Wenn, tanner, who died in 1697.

In 1642, Richard, son-of-William, paid two. shiftings and eight-pence to the subsidy them raised: by his first wife he had three sens, Roger who died in 1679; Thomas, the time of whose death does not appear; and Richard, who died in 1688: by his second wife he had two sons, John, bred up to the law, and third master of Wem school; and William, an eminent merchant in London, who gave fifty pounds to the school at Wem; and one daughter, Ann, married to Andrew Huntbach, saddler; and afterwards to Robt. Amis, taylor. Richard above, father of these children, sold his paternal estate to his cousin, Sir Thomas Adams, founder of Wem

The principal Estates in Northwood,

school, who, being immensely rich, bought the following eight estates, or the reversion of them, in this township:

1. The estate of his cousin, Richd, Adams, which Minshul now holds; the house lies up to Thieves Bridge Lane.—2. Another estate which has been long annexed to the former; the messuage is taken down, but it stood on the opposite side of Thieves Bridge Lane.—3. A small tenement near Northwood Green, held by Mr. Heyward.-4. A tenement near to Thieves Bridge Lane, in the occupation of Edward Huntbach.-5. An estate on the other side of Thieves Bridge, held by Wm. Bromley; the messuage and croft adjoining to it, are called the Old Folds, as they were two hundred years ago. -6. A messuage lying between Thieves Bridge and Northwood Lanes; it was bought of the Harper's, and is now in the holding of the Furbers.—7. The Hornspyhe Farm, lying between the Mosses of Wem and Whixall; it was leased to the Wilkinson's at the time it was purchased by Sir Thomas Adams.—8. A small tenement beyond the Hornspyhe, which has been long in the occupation of the Egerton's. Francis Edgerton paid four-pence to the subsidy in 1642.

Sir Thomas Adams, purchaser of these estates, died the 24th February, 1668. Sir William, his eldest son, had nine sons and a daughter; he died in 1687. Sir Thomas, his second son, succeeded his father,

The principal Estates in Northwood.

and died unmarried August, 1690. Sir Charles, his sixth son, succeeded his brother, sold Sprowston-Hall, in Norfelk, the family seat, and mortgaged these estates in Northwood to Lady Rolle, who, by will, devised them to several persons. Mr. Sandys, of Canterbury, is now (1753) the chief proprietor, having all but Lord Walpole's share. Sir Robert, the eighth son, succeeded his brother August 12, 1726, and is now living at London; he was solicitor for that city before the title fell to him.

On the left-hand of the road from Wolverley Bridge to Northwood Green, are two tenements now united. In 1650, they were purchased of John Bromhall, gentleman, by the feoffees of Wem school.

On the right-hand of Northwood Lane, is a messuage and farm which did belong to Joseph Wilk-inson, who sold part thereof, valued at £12 per annum, to Mr. Wingfield, of Preston Brockhurst, and the other part, valued £10 per annum, to his own brother-in-law, Lloyd, who keeps it for his life, but has conveyed the reversion to the Wingfields.

A little farther on the same lane, lies the Pinfold tenement, the property of Samuel Wilkinson. In 1642, Thomas Wilkinson, brother of Robert, of Wolverley, paid ten-pence to the subsidy, and died in 1675; Robert, his son, lived at the Hornspyhe,

The principal Retates in Northwood.

which he held by lease, and afterwards at Aston-hall, which he purchased in 1684, and some years afterwards sold it again to the Chancellor Jeffreys; he died in Aston, in 1700. Thomas, son of Robert, died in 1740. Samuel, son of Thomas, the present possessor, to discharge a mortgage that lay on his estate, sold some lands to Newtown chapel, and some to Mrs. Benyon.

Between Northwood Lane and Redfellis Brook, Richard Groom has a small tenement which he lately purchased of Mr. Watson, of Whitchurch, whose father bought it of William Jackson, wagoner.

There are no remains of the Great Wood but the name. William, Lord Dacre, began to fall it in the latter end of the reign of Henry VIII. he made no great progress. In 1561, the third Elizabeth, Philip, Earl of Arundel, went on with the work, which his Dowager, Ann, completed.

The Heath was formerly called Blackford Heath, now Wem Heath, up to which lies the Morass: they have Betchfield Morass on the north, the Hornspyhe on the east, Minshall's farm on the south, and Brayn's tenement on the west. In this ground, which is about a mile in compass, the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages get turf for fuel. The boggy ground is properly Morass, the sound ground the Heath.

The Township of Tilley.

TILLEY.

The Boundaries, Extent, Soil, Tenure and Valuation of Tilley.

NILLEY is a contraction for Tilleley, which signifies the field or estate of Tillie, who seems to have been a Norman adventurer under the command of William Pantulff, baron of Wem. Tillie is in the list of the great men who came in with William the Conqueror; the name might be common then to several others. In the 24th of Edward I. Tilleley is mentioned as one of the members of Wem. In ancient times Tilley was a considerable manor, for the manor of Beslarve, in the county of Salop, was dependent on it. In 1561, Thomas Poyner held of the lord of Wem, the manor of Beslarve, as member of his manor of Tilley, by homage, fealty, and appearance at his courts. When a subsidy of a fifteenth part of their moveables was granted to the king, the manor of Beslarve, (being half a knight's fee) was always charged 4d. towards the payment of the said fifteenth with the tenants of the township or hamlet of Tilley. This township is bounded on the north by Wem, on the east by Aston and Preston Brockhurst, on the south by Clive and Broughton and part of middle, on the west by Noneley and Sleap. Its length from the One-house in Preston to the borders of Noneley is about two measured miles; its breadth from Wem The Lord's Demone in Tilley.

The Pools was formerly a wood called the Great Pollys and the Little Pollys, lying between the Trench Farm and the Clive Wood; it was purchased by Daniel Wycherley, gentleman, of one Trevor, and has since had the same proprietor as the Trench farm, part of which has been added to it.

The Old Park, in this township, was so called to dietinguish it from the New Park in Edstaston. At the survey, John Allinson held the herbage of it at the will of the lord of the manor, for the annual rent of 11s. 6d. the pannage was reserved to the lord of the manor, and was a casualty, there being some years plenty and other years a scarcity of mast; it has long been disparked, the wood fallen, and the land sold to several proprietors. This sale seems to have been by Sir Wm. Playters and Sir Richard Onslow about the end of the civil war. It is at present divided into five parts and has four messuages upon it, viz. 1. The ancient Park-house with a fourth part of the land was sold to Thomas Jenks, of Shrewsbury, goldsmith, from whom it was descended to his grand-son, Thomas, of Whitchurch, steward to the Duke of Bridgewater. - 2. Another portion was bought by Andrew Parsons, Rector of Wem, who built upon it, and sold to Roger Spendlove, whose son, Thomas, conveyed it to Roger Acherley, esq. and he to the Vernons. It is now annexed to the principal estate in Tilley.—3. A

The principal Estatas in Tilley.

third share was likewise bought and built on by the said Andrew Parsons, who after his ejectment from the rectory, sold it to Roger Spendleye; and he gave it to his son, Peter, minister of Marbury, in Cheshire, from whom it came to the Bakers, the heiress of which family has, by marriage, carried it to one Walker, a butcher in Newport.-4. The Roowood is a fourth part, which one Griffiths sold to Presland, of Shrewsbury, linen-draper, and the assignees of Presland to the Hon. Richard Hill, from whom it descended to his nephew, Sir Rowland. About £8 a year in Noneley is now joined to it.— 5. The fifth part has no house upon it; it belonged to the Dymocks, and by the heiress of that family was brought to the Watkiss, of Shotten, gentleman, whose grand-son, John, does now enjoy it.

THE OTHER PRINCIPAL ESTATES, IN 17532

The first house on the left hand as we enter the town from Tilley Green, had formerly a large estate annexed to it, belonging to the Donnes; and the house on the other side of the street was possessed by the same family; from the Donnes they passed to John and George Higginsons in 1561. Robert and Thomas paid for them in the subsidy in 1642. Robert, grand-son of the latter, was one of the plaintiffs against Daniel Wycherley, gentleman, and was

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bound for Mr. Smith, of Wem, mercer, in the sum £1000, this was the ruin of the family. Lawrence. son of Robert, succeeded to the estate in 1684, and died in 1696. John, son of Lawrence, a wild and wicked man, sold several parcels to Whitfield, Holbrooke, Hughes, Presland, &c. and about 1708, the whole remainder of the estate to Roger Acherley, of Stanwardine in the Fields. esq. who granted a lease of it for three lives to Mr. Athrington, vicar of Shawbury, from whom it was devolved on Mr. Binnell, parish clerk of Saint Alkmonds, in Shrewsbury. In 1747, John Higginson died in the work-house at Wem. Mr. Acherley, having sustained a great loss by the south-sea bubble, sold this estate, subject to the lease above, to his brother-in-law, Bow Walter Vernon, esq. whose son is the present owner.

The next messuage, with a low brick-wall before it, belonged to the Haywards in the reign of Henry VIII. William Hayward, jun. was possessed of it in 1561. John and John, his son, were charged for it towards the subsidy in 1642. John, son of the latter, sold above half the estate, which was computed then to be worth about eighty pounds per annum. Thomas Spendlove, gentleman, was the purchaser about 1687. John, the present owner, is an ironmonger in Whitchurch; he has in some measure repaired the waste which his father had made; in his land there is a noted mineral spring, which

The principal Estates in Tilley.

has a strong tincture of alum; the well is four square, planked on the sides and flagged at the bottom; William Price, late of Wem, mason, is said to have given flags and the work in consideration of his having been cured of the rheumatism by bathing in it; the water is reckoned good for sore eyes and all cutaneous eruptions. Mr. Hayward has three other small houses in this tewn.

Next to Mr. Hayward's, on the same side of the street, is a messuage and tenement which Thomas Spendlove, gentleman, bought of the Jebbs, and joined the land to his own estate, together with which it is now come to the Vernons.

Still keeping on the south-side of the street, a neat half-timbered house, with a high brick wall, presents itself to our view; the old estate belonged to the Thurlewynds in the time of Henry the VIII. In 1561, at the general survey, there were two messuages on it, and part of the estate belonged to Richard Thurlewynd, son and heir of William; and the remainder, being the greatest part, was held by his grand-mother, Alice, as her free bench. Before the civil war the Bosiers were in possession of this farm; Peter Bosier paid to the subsidy in 1642; of him Roger Spendlove purchased it at a very low price, and built the present house in 1665: his son, Thomas, made great additions to the estate, and

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The principal Estates in Tilley.

in so flourishing a condition, that he was supposed to have £200 per annum in Clive and Tilley; but this fair estate was ruined by his being surety for his nephew, Thomas Spendlove, who was receiver of the land-tax for the county of Stafford. He sold the reversion to his nephew, Roger Acherley, of Stanwardine in the Fields, esq. who, in 1720, suffered so much in the south-sea bubble, that he sold to Bowater Vernon, of Hanbury, in Worcestershire, esq. whose son Thomas, member of parliament for Worcester, now enjoys the estate.

The Lufkins or Levekins, being an ancient family, who still keep possession of the next message and estate; Margery, relict of William Lovekin, was tenant to the lord of the manor in 1561; and John Lovekin paid to the subsidy, in 1642; his sen Thomas, was one of the first feoffices of Wem school, and was buried in 1661. Benjamin, son of Thomas, sold the estate called the Takings, (a small tenement) to Bichard Corbet, of Moreton Corbet, esquabeut 1711; and some other parcels belonging to the estate he lived on, to Hughes, of Threpwood, and Pay, of Wem. Thomas, son of Benjamin, the present proprietor, is a chair-maker in Shrewsbury; his estate is mortgaged to Mr. Pierson, minister of St. Julians, in Shrewsbury, for £350.

Next to Lovekin's, on the same side of the street, is a messuage and estate which formerly belonged

The principal Estates in Tilley.

to Lewis Bevan, gentleman, who died in 1687; Elizabeth, his widow, in 1692, by marriage, carried the estate to Thomas Hughes, of Threpwood, gentleman, and added to it a field bought of John Higginson. The only daughter and heir of Hughes married William Dimock, of Wrexham, esq. who is the present owner.

Opposite to Dimock's is a messuage and estate of Sir Rowland Hill. Robert Whitfield, settled here after 1642, and died in 1644; his son Robert, left the estate to his daughter, who married William Shaw, buried at Wem in 1707. Shaw's eldest daughter married one Simpson, who, about 1709, mortgaged the estate to the Hon, Richard Hill, who ejected Simpson, and granted a lease for lives to his steward, Mr. John Dickin, whose widow enjoys it at present.

Leaving the town of Tilley, I will new take notice of some tenements within the Township, beginning near Wem:

The Mill-house was built by Andrew Parsons, rector of Wem, in 1656, and in the front has this date with the initial letters of his own and wife's name. It has passed through several hands, as the Bykers, Arnolds, Dolemans, Gills, Chettoes, to the present proprietor, William Jeffreys.

The principal Estates in Tilley.

Opposite to the Mill-house is a messuage and estate which, in 1677, belonged to Samuel Fermstone, of Brandwood, and was then £9 a year. Mr. Samuel Jones sold it to Thomas Hughes, of Threpwood, gentleman, who has since augmented it by the purchase of Brad-meadows, and parcels of Higginson's and Lovekin's estates. Hughes's only daughter and heir carried it, by marriage, to William Dimock, of Wrexham, esq. a distant relation to the champion of England,

The Wood-houses were two messuages made into one; Margery, relict of William Adams, was the possessor in 1561, at the same time her son, John Adams, was of the jury of survey. John, great grand-son of the last mentioned, paid to the subsidy in 1642, and was one of the feoffees of Wem school. His daughter, in 1661, by marriage, brought the estate to Thomas Hayward, younger son of the family of Tilley. The great grand-son of this Thomas settled it on his wife just before his death in 1738. She joined with her husband, an excise-officer, and sold it to Messrs. Henshaw and Walford, of Wem.

The One-house, near to Preston Brockhurst, belonged to the Masseys, of whom it was bought by Richard Corbet, of Moreton Corbet, esq. and settled it on his youngest son George, during his life.

The Fields, the Green, and Lanes of Tilley.

Paunton Hill, (now Palms Hill) was so called from the Pantulffs or Pantoms, the first barons of Wem; here is a tenement which, in 1673, belonged to Rowland Dickin, whose grand-son, John Dickin, of Aston Hall, lately resigned to his own son.

THE COMMON FIELDS, THE GREEN, AND LANES OF TILLEY.

There were formerly three common fields belonging to this township, viz.—1. Brockley Field, which lies between Tilley and the Old Park.—2. Tilleley Field, a little beyond the Wood-house, the boundary of which on that side is very visible; there are two pieces of land abutting on Aston Lane, which still retain the old name.—3. Burley Field, between Hough Lane and Malnies Oak. Dimock has some ground belonging to this tenement, near Wem Mill, which still bears the name of Burley.

Tilley or Trench Green, is common or waste ground, about three quarters of a mile in compass. Here all the inhabitants have right of pasture, and the land-owners of making brick, the clay being proper for that purpose.

Goo Lane reached from Wem Mill to Tilley.— Hough Lane began from Millington's house and led to Burley Field.—Woodhouse Lane is between TilThe Township of Sleap.

Ley and Wood-house.—Aston Lane is between Wood-house and Aston.—Paunton Lane is between Aston Lane and Paunton Hill.—Stones Lane is between Tilley and Tilley Green.—Trench Lane is between ——— and the liberties of Shrewsbury.

SLEAP.

The Boundaries, Extent, Soil, and Tenure of Sloop.

MLEAP is a name given by the Saxons only to three towns in England; this and another in Dradford South still retain it, but the third in Huntdngdonshire, for above 1000 years, has been called St. Ives. This township is bounded on the north by Noneley, in Loppington parish; east by Tilley; on the south by Hawson, in Middle parish; and on the west by Brandwood, in the same parish. Its length from the township of Tilley to Brandwood is about a mile and a half; its breadth from Sleap-brook to Sleap-Hall brook is three-quarters of a mile. The soil is for the most part very sandy, and bears excellent rye, barley, and oats; it suits well enough with large cattle, but agrees best with sheep: some of the ground is moorish, and has a black rotten earth, about a yard deep, on a gravelly bottom; another part is called the Heath, which was formerly a common, but has been long enclosed. The

whole township is freehold, no other tenure has been obtained here since the Reign of Henry II.—Sleap is in the hundred of Pimhill, and so does not fall within the compass of this work; but as it was formerly a member of the barony of Wem, and always a part of Wem parish, I did not think fit to omit it.

THE ESTATES IN THIS TOWN AND OWNERS OF THEM IN SEVERAL AGES.

In the reign of Henry II. Hugo Pantulff or Pantor, (for Pantor seems a mistake of the transcriber) granted to Richard de Sleap all the village of Sleap, to be held of him and his heirs in fee farm, paying the annual rent of 16s. and doing homage, viz. The men or vassals of the said Richard de Sleap, and of his heirs, were obliged to grind their corn at the lord of the manor's mill at Wem, to assist at the drawing of mill-stones and cleansing the pond; and when the ford of the manor's other freemen helped him to make his castle, Richard de Sleap, and his heirs, were to help Hugo and his heirs in that or the like work.

In process of time the inheritance of the whole township of Sleap came to Richard Bannister, of Hadnall, and Peter his son, who by their indenture of bargain and sale, dated the 12th of March, 1545,

in the 36th Henry VIII. for the sum of £28. 13s. 4d. did bargain and sell unto William Noneley, Margaret his wife, and William Groom, their heirs and assigns, for ever, four messuages and one cottage, and four yards of land to the same belonging, in the town and fields of Sleap, with commons and appurtenances. Sixteen years after this sale, at the survey in 1561, there were but three estates in this town; and they belonged to Richard Drury, William Groom, and John Perbolde; of them the free rent of 16s. was demanded, and apportioned thus, Drury 6s. Groom 6s. Perbolde 4s.

In 1683, a hundred and twenty-two years after the survey, there were four estates in this town of near equal value, for they were assessed equally in the church and poor levy; the first belonged to Thomas Wingfield, of Preston Brockhurst, esq. the second to Edward Garland, gentleman; the third to William Groom, yeoman; and the fourth to Widow Morgan, who marrying unfortunately, he was obliged to sell or divide his estate to portion his four sisters and his own two daughters. Mr. Wingfield augmented his farm, by purchasing several of these shares. The messuage which did belong to Morgan's estate has been pulled down.

February 7, 1738, this town was laid in ashes by sudden fire in the day time, before a vast concourse

of people, that were able to give but very little assistance. The flames first broke out about eleven or twelve o'clock in Mr. Wingfield's house, where the tenant's house-keeper was washing clothes, by a piece of wood in the chimney taking fire, communicated it to the rest of the buildings, and being a brisk wind spread it with so much rapidity, that the conflagration soon became general. The three dwelling-houses, with all the barns and outbuildings were consumed. A brief was obtained for the relief of the unhappy sufferers.

Rowland Wingfield, of Preston Brockhurst, esq. has the principal estate, which seems to be that which Richard Drury was once possessed of; the house and barns are built of brick and covered with tile, to prevent, if possible, such a calamity as they have once undergone.

John Groom is descended from an ancient family, who settled here in the reign of Henry VIII, but is of so bad a temper, as to make all his neighbours very uneasy. The frame of his present house came from Darlston, being purchased of Mr. George Tyler after the fire.

William Greenwollers, grocer and ironmonger, of Whitchurch, has the third estate by his marriage with the heiress of the Garlands, who had

enjoyed it for four generations. Mr. Gyles, who married the widow of the last Garlands, sold the muck off his estate for seven years together, so that it has great need of improvements. The house which he erected after the fire, was bought of Mr. John Hinton, and formerly stood on Wolverley Yard, being the messuage that belonged to my tenement in that township.

It is observable that Richard de Sleap and his men are not obliged to attend the courts leet and baron of Wem, nor does it appear that they who claimed from him ever did. The constable of Sleap is sworn at the Duke of Bridgewater's court at Middle. The reserved rent of 16s. is still paid, but pannage ceased with the forest, the repair of the castle at its demolition, working at the mill upon its alienation, the serving the king in his wars, upon the change of all tenures by knights service into common socage.

ASTON.

The Boundaries, Extent, Soil, Tenure and Valuation of Aston.

HERE are about forty towns in England called Aston, a corruption of the word Eastune or East Town, this lying eastward from Wem. Thus,

The Township of Aston.

other towns take their name from their situation, as Weston, Norton, &c. This town is bounded on the north by those of Edstaston and Lacon; on the east by Soulton; on the south by Lee Brockhurst and Preston Brockhurst; and on the west by Tilley and Its length from Astley's of the Brook to Lee Wear, at the foot of the Hill-cop-bank, is near two miles; and its breadth from Coteman's Wear to Soulton Mill is above a mile and a half. beyond the River Roden, towards Hill-cop-bank. Preston Brockhurst, and Panton-hill, is clay; on the other side of the River, towards Wem, is a mixture of mold, gravel, and sand. The clay ground bears excellent wheat, but must be marled for barley; the sandy and gravelly ground bears muncorn. rve, barley, &c. muck and marle are the common manure, some little lime is used; but the dairy turns to greatest account. At the survey in 1561, there was only one estate that was freehold, and belonged then to John Astley, gentleman, and now to Mr. Lloyd, of Crowsmere. Playters and Onslow enfranchised Moreton's, now Walford's tenement. In respect to the land-tax, this township is valued at £263. 6s. 8d. per annum, which at 2s. in the pound, the assessment would be £26. 6s. 8d.

THE LORD'S DEMESNE IN ASTON, 1651.

It consisted only of one meadow and two pastures, viz. The Lady Meadow, lying up to Lacon, then es-

timated to be eight acres, and rented at 2s. does now belong to William Taylor, of Wem.—A Pasture of eight acres, lying next the lord of the manor's meadow, called the Cross Meadow; and another of six acres adjoining the former, were then set at one pound per annum.

THE PRINCIPAL ESTATES, IN 1753.

Aston Hall, with a large copyhold estate, in the reigns of Henry VII. and part of Henry VIII. belonged to Sir Gilbert Talbot, third son of John, second Earl of Shrewsbury, and son-in-law to Ralph, Lord Greystock, baron of Wem, who made him chief steward of the barony. On the landing of the Earl of Richmond, this gentleman met him at Newport, in Shropshire, with the whole power of the Earl of Shrewsbury, then in ward: and the battle of Bosworth, wherein King Richard the Ill. was slain, he had the command of the right wing of the army, and was then knighted for his valiant behaviour; he died September 19, 1517, the ninth Henry VIII. and was buried at Whitchurch, where his younger brother, Christopher, was rector. Sir Gilbert's death, this estate devolved on his son Sir Gilbert Talbot, of Grafton; and at his decease, 1543, on Mary, daughter of this second Sir Gilbert, married to Sir Thomas Astley, of Pateshed, who gave it to his youngest son John, married to Mary.

daughter of — Hoorde, of Northwood Hall; from whom are descended the Astleys, of Aston. At the time of the survey, this John Astley was settled here. in 1588 he was foreman of the homage extra barram; in 1597 he died; his son Richard paid to the subsidy in 1642, and died in 1645. Edward, son of Richard, married to Mrs. Cicely Hill, of Soulton, was one of the first feoffees of Wem school, and died in December, 1675; his son Thomas, on account of the suit depending between Mr. Wycherley and the copyholders, was not admitted to the estate until 1682, when he paid a fine of £70. though £16. 13s. 4d. had been taken in the first and second of Philip and Mary, when the estate was much larger than at this time. This gentleman lived with his cousin Thomas Hill, of Soulton, esq.; in 1684, sold the estate to Robert Wilkinson, of the Hornspyhe, and survived the sale but a little above a year. Before 1680, Lord Chancellor Jeffreys purchased this estate of Wilkinson; and since this time it has gone along with the manor of Wem.

Andrew Corbet, of Moreton Corbet, esq. has a copyhold messuage and estate on the other side of the road; they belonged to the Menloves in the reign of Henry VII. and perhaps long before; at the survey in 1561, Thomas Menlove was of the jury; and it continued in his family for five generations; the last whereof was William Menlove, who

The Fields, the Green, and Lanes of Aston.

married Mrs. Margaret Jebb, and died in 1697; his widow enjoyed the estate until her death in 1706: but in her life-time, Richard Menlove, of Wem, inn-keeper, nephew and heir of her late husband, sold the reversion of it to Richard Corbet, of Moreton Corbet, esq. who granted a lease thereof to Andrew Downes, of Preston Brockhurst, attorney, which is now enjoyed by his daughter, Mrs. Marigold, of Lee-Gomery, near Wellington. This estate cost Mr. Corbet £1150. and as soon as it came into his possession he made £500. of the wood, had £500. for the lease, and afterwards one hundred pounds for putting in a new life, besides twenty pounds a year for rent.

On the other side of the River Roden, near the bridge, is the freehold messuage and estate of the Talbots, and afterwards of the Astleys for many generations; Thomas Astley, gentleman, the last of this line, mortgaged this estate to Robert Badeley. Mr. Richard Allen, who had married the sister of the said Thomas, first redeemed, and sold it in 1711, to Mr. Lloyd, of Crowsmere, whose son is the present proprietor. The whole estate is valued at fifty-four pounds per annum, but the remote part of it being set with a different tenement, I shall have occasion to mention it in another place.

The copyhold messuage of William Watkiss, of

Namptwich, gentleman, is partly opposite to Mr. Lloyd's. This family has been of long standing in this town, for they settled here 268 years ago. In the fourth Henry VII. John Watkiss was returned on a jury; at the survey in 1561, Thomas Watkiss had five messuages in this township; and three Williams followed him successively in a direct line. Samuel, son of the last, was the first that removed from Aston. The present gentleman, grand-son of the last, is possessed of a good estate in Cheshire.

The next messuage and tenement is freehold, and belongs to Thomas Walford, of Wem, gentleman. At the survey in 1561, this was the estate of John Moreton, being then copyhold; he was succeeded in it by his son George, and his grand-son Thomas, whose death happened in the beginning of 1654. About this time it was purchased by Mr. Samuel Smith, of Wem, mercer, who absconded in 1676, and by his bankruptcy ruined many families, who had put their fortunes in his hands, or engaged for him to others. Mrs. Mary Goodwin entered on this estate by virtue of a mortgage; which being discharged, Joseph Smith, mercer, son of Samuel, enjoyed it as long as he lived; but on some occasion, having submitted his writings to the perusal of Mr. Wilson, of Wem, attorney, he discovered that this estate was subject to his father's debt: on this information Mr. William Walford, of Lee Brockhurst,

sued for an old debt, and recovered this estate in 1722. His son is now in possession of it.

The Basnets have a copyhold messuage and tenement in this town, which formerly belonged to the Husseys: Richard Hussey paid to the subsidy in 1642. In 1698, one of his descendants sold it to William Basnet, of Wichey, who was succeeded in 1708, by his son Roger; and Roger in 1719, by his grand-son Peter; and Peter in 1749, by his nephew Richard Basnet, of Hardiston.

Brockhurst, in 1561, was one of the five woods within the manor of Wem; it then belonged to William, Lord Dacre, and was distinguished from Preston Brockhurst, which was the property of Roger Corbet, esq. It continued a wood when the civil war broke out, for it was not charged to the subsidy in 1642. It is probable that the Playters and Onslow felled the timber, and sold the freehold land to Mr. Samuel Smith, of Wem, mercer, who, in 1676, became a bankrupt; in 1683, his-son Joseph, mercer, had one moiety of it, and Sir Robert Cotton the other. In 1691 and 1692, the whole was in the hands of Mr. Joseph Smith; in 1693 it was divided between Lady Moore and Sir John Turner, baron of the Exchequer, mortgagees. In 1705, it was sold to John Hill, of Hawkstone, gentleman, whose son Sir Rowland Hill, is the present landlord of it.

The Hill is a copyhold farm, which formerly was part of that of Aston Hall, except a meadow that has been added to it. In 1684 it belonged to Mrs. Downes, of Lee; in 1691 to her niece, Mrs. Jane Bromfield, of Lee; in 1695 to William Newans, of Lee; in 1700 to Mr. Joseph Nixon, of the same town, who sold it to Mr. Bayley, of Besford, the present owner thereof. To the west of the house, about thirty years ago, were dug up a great many large stones, supposed to be the remains of a roman way, or perhaps of some ancient building or fort.

The messuage of Mr. Lawrence has been distinguished by three several names, viz. the Moat House, on account of the moat about it; the Woodhouse, on account of the wood near it; and Besse Hall. In the fourth Henry VIII. William Moreton. of Ludlow, sold this copyhold messuage and farm to Thomas Lawrence, of Aston. In the third Elizabeth, 1561, Thomas Lawrence, a descendant of the above, was possessed of it, by virtue of a copy, dated twenty-third Henry VIII; this Thomas Lawrence, or his son, sold his estate to the Hinkes, of Noneley. In the eighth Charles I. 1632, Thomas Hinkes, of Noneley, gentleman, granted it by deed (an unusual conveyance of copyhold lands) to his second son Francis, who was in Ireland, October 3, 1641, when the rebellion broke out there; he and his wife fled from the popish massacre, but left a young child

behind them, whom the fond nurse would not part with. He survived the troubles of his own country, but had the misfortune to be drowned at Coteman's wear in 1663. His son Arthur, was one of the plaintiffs against Mr. Wycherley. In his advanced age he removed to Wem, where he died in 1719, leaving his estate to William Lawrence, brother to his second wife, whose son John now enjoys it, and has considerably augmented it. In his new purchase is the alum well, which is good for sore eyes and cutaneous disorders.

The Wear estate took its name from Coteman's Wear, being near to it; it is copyhold, except some lands in Tilley that have been annexed thereto; it belonged to the Wingfields until they sold it to Mr. Blakeway, of Salop, mortgagee, by whom it has been lately sold to Caleb Powell, of Besford, who about the same time bought Malines' Oak, and other copyhold lands of Mr. John Whitfield, of Salop, surgeon, and joined them to this farm, which estate Mr. John Whitfield purchased a few years before he sold it.

The Farm of Astley of the Brook, between Wem and Lacon, consists of three parts, viz. The copyhold messuage, and lands annexed to it, set at £6. 10s. per annum, belong to Andrew Corbet, esq. being part of the Menloves estate; the Moors and

The River Roden, the Fields, the Green, and Lanes of Aston.

other copyhold lands, set at £11. per annum, belonged to Mr. Goldisbury, of the Rys Bank, being a lease from the Watkiss's; the remainder, set at £18. a year, is part of the freehold estate of Mr. Lloyd, of Crowsmere, which formerly belonged to the Astleys; the present tenant, Thomas Astley, is descended from Lawrence Astley, gentleman, younger brother of Richard, of Aston Hall, who paid to the subsidy in 1642.

THE RIVER RODEN, COMMON FIELDS, BARKER'S GREEN, AND ASTON LANES.

The River Roden passes through this township, and has a wooden bridge over it at Aston; the several parts of which are kept in repair by the principal inhabitants.

Aston had formerly three Common Fields, viz. Wem Field, part of which remains and forms the angle made by Soulton Lane when joined by that from Aston.—Winsorton Field, abutting on Soulton Lane and reaching almost to Astley's of the Brook; its name is still preserved in Winsorton Bank, near to the said Astley's house.—Barley Field, which lies between the River Roden and Sowford Lane, extending towards Soulton wood.

Barker's Green, is a small common near to Coteman's Wear; the clay here is good for making brick. The Township of Lacon.

Coteman's Wear Lane extends from the Wear to Barker's Green.—The Hill Lane or Hill-cop-bank, corruptly called Held-cop-bank.—Sowford Lane, now Oller Lane, lies between Aston and Soulton Wood,



The Boundaries, Extent, Soil, Tenure and Valuation of Lecons

THIS is the only town in England called Lacon, and therefore it is my conjecture that the ancient family of the Lacons took their name from it. It is a manor, but no court leet or court baron is kept for it; the constable is sworn at the county court at Wellington: he is the only inhabitant that appears there, but the other tenants send for him eight-pence each for their non-appearance. bounded on the north by Edstaston and Cotton; on the east by Dogmore, in the parish of Prees, and by Soulton; on the south by Aston; and on the west by Wem and Edstaston. Its length from the confines of Cotton to those of Aston is a mile and a quarter; and its breadth from Astley's of the Brook to the borders of Soulton is a mile. The soil is of different natures, being in one place sandy, in another gravelly, in a third clayey, and in a fourth mossy; according to this variety the farmers sow

wheat, muncorn, or rye, on the lands suitable to each; in their mosses they find fir-wood; and in the pasture ground they keep good store of cattle for the dairy as well as other uses; muck and marke are their chief manure. In respect to the land-tax, this township is valued at £124. 13s. 2d. per ann. which at 2s. in the pound, the assessment would be £12, 9s. 4d,

THE LORDS OF THE MANOR:

In all probability the Lacons were anciently lords. of this manor; for the principal families generally took their names from the places of their residence or inheritance. In the reigns of Edward IV. and Richard III. Ralph Bannister or Bannistre was lord of this manor. He had been tenderly brought up by Humphrey Stafford, the great Duke of Ruckingham, who loved, favoured, and trusted him above all his servants. To his house the Duke retreated when he was deserted by his army in 1483: he was proclaimed a traitor by the king, and one hundred pounds a year in land, and one thousand pounds of ready money was offered for his discovery; the hopes of gaining so great a reward, or the fear of losing his goods and life, tempted Bannister to betray his master to John Mytton, esq. then high-sheriff of Shropshire; who coming suddenly with a strongbody of armed men, apprehended the Duke, dis-

guised like a peasant, in a little grove near to the house, either at Lacon or Milford; for both belonged to the Bannisters. Tradition reports that the Duke, falling on his knees, cursed Bannister and his posterity to the tenth generation; but the king rewarded him with the manor of Ealding, in Kent, which lately belonged to the Duke. Carte, from the continuation of the history of Croyland, asserts, that the daily carrying of an unusual quantity of victuals to Bannisters house gave occasion to the discovery of the place where the Duke was concealed. But the history of Sir Thomas Moore, whose father was a judge and co-temporary with Bannister, is much more credible than the relation of an annonmous munk, who lived very remote from the scene of action. Kennet, Echard, Rapin, Guthrey, and Tradition are against him: Kennet has been to assign the peculiar reward of Bannister's treachery; and Sir Thomas Moore, in his history of these times, takes notice of the vengeance of heaven which soon after fell on this family, viz: " Bannister's son and heir lost his senses, and died mad in a hog-stye; his eldest daughter, of excellent beauty, was suddenly striken with foul leprosy; his second son became a deformed cripple; a younger son was drowned in a small puddle; he, himself, in his old age, was arraigned and found guilty of murder, and saved only by his clergy."

At the last survey of the manor of Wem, Edward Bannister, esq. was in possession of his lordship.

Lawrence Bannister, esq. seems to have been son or younger brother of the former; he was highsteward of Wem, and as such servant to the Duke of Norfolk, who became seized with the barony of Wem, as guardian to the young Lord Dacre, whose mother he had married. Bannister was his ordinary counsellor in matters of law, and one of his chief confidents in his most secret affairs, particularly in the conspiracy of Ridolphi. When Browne, the Duke's servant, delivered to Queen Elizabeth's coursel the French Ambassador's money, that he was to have carried to Bannister, at his country house near Shrewsbury, i. e. at Wem, and which Bannister was to have forwarded to Mr. Lowther, on the frontiers of Scotland, the Duke and several of his servants were committed to the tower. Bannister on his examination confessed nothing, but being presented to the torture or rack, owned that he had been con-, cerned in his Graces intelligence with the Queen of Scots; and confessed the little he knew of other matters, particularly of Ridolphi's affairs. At length he obtained his liberty, and continued high-steward of Wem until the time of his death, in 1588. This gentleman obtained a lease of Wem Pools, which he drained by means of a wide and deep canal, now called the Strinde; he left a son, Richard Bannister,

of —, gentleman, who inherited his father's copyhold tenement in Tilley, and two burgages in Wem. Elizabeth Bannister, I suppose his daughter, married Reginald, a younger brother of Sir Richard Newport, of High-Ercall.

Rowland Bannister, esq. in the beginning of the reign of James I. was possessed of this lordship, and died May 10, 1610.

Richard Bannister, of Lacon, esq. son of Rowland, was eighteen years old at his father's death. He had a son, Rowland, born in 1615, and Robert in 1618, but survived them both, and was succeeded in his estate by his brother.

Joseph Bannister, of Lacon esq. who was the last of the family that resided in, or was possessed of this lordship, which, before the civil war, he sold to his relation Sir Richard Newport, of High-Ercall, then high-steward of Wem; for Sir Richard was charged for it to the subsidy in 1642. Joseph Bannister died at London about the year 1681, in the 78d year of his age, having left fifty pounds to the poor of Wem parish, and as much more to the school of Wem. Not only the manor, but all the farms within it have continued in the family of the Newports, from the first baron of High-Ercall, to the present Earl of Bradford.



THE PRINCIPAL ESTATES IN LACON.

Lacon Hall was the seat of the Bannisters, wherein they resided from 1560, and perhaps from the reign of Edward IV; here they show the hole where the Duke of Buckingham was hid, but it is not probable that he was ever in it; his keeping close in the house, and being disguised when he ventured out, was thought a sufficient concealment. ford, near Baschurch, is a large half-timbered house which belonged to the Bannisters, and is a more private place than Lacon: I have been formerly told that the Duke in his distress fled thither; the tenants had such a tradition. If I may be allowed to conjecture, I should think that Milford was the ancient seat of the Bannisters, and that when they sold the manor of Ealding, in Kent, (which was a reproach to the family) they bought with the money the manor of Lacon, which lay near them, and thereupon made it the place of their residence. Half the present messuage at Lacon is built of brick, and seems to be of no long standing; the farm consists of large fields, and generally firm and good land.

The farm formerly leased to Robert Hill, and now held by Roger Ireland, consists of cold, moist land, which agrees best with wheat.

George Weaver holds two farms, in one of which, at the survey, there was a wood, then called Shetenhurst; the trees have long since been felled, and the proper name has been forgotten, but the ground is still called the wood; in the mossy parts of it oaks and firs have been found, and in one place three firs lying one upon another.

Arthur Calcot's tenement has some mossy ground which affords firs; between this and Weaver's farm, there is a small pool about an acre in extent; the water is shallow and not well stored with fish.

FINIS.

G. Franklin, Printer, Went

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